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The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

IN his speech on Wednesday Mr. Molotov agreed that the latest British proposals were based on the essential principle of "reciprocity in defence," but showed that the U.S.S.R. was still suspicious of Mr. Chamberlain's sincerity. Mr. Molotov laid down three principles—that the alliance must be of a defensive character, which everyone agrees about, that it must guarantee all the countries on the Western border of the Soviet Union, whereas Britain has not at present included the Baltic States in her commitments, and that it must be a concrete agreement for assistance if one of the signatories is attacked. Now that the Axis is fully armed and swift in aggression, the U.S.S.R. will have nothing to do with the slow processes and possible loopholes of Article 16 of the Covenant. Russia wants staff conversations with a practical scheme of immediate action in the East and the West in the event of a German attack. The speech suggests that Russia expects these difficulties to be overcome. It also shows clearly that the U.S.S.R. is above all anxious to avoid war and is anxious to maintain good economic relations with Germany. Like other nations Russia, in Stalin's words, is determined "not to allow our country to be drawn into conflict by warmongers who are accustomed to have others pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them." The U.S.S.R., in a word, is cautious, realistic and suspicious; it is willing to discuss and possibly to negotiate with Hitler, but it wants an alliance with the democracies as quickly as possible, provided the alliance is of a kind to make war less likely and increase the security of the U.S.S.R.

Danzig

Dr. Burckhardt, the League High Commissioner, has returned to Danzig after his long absence, to report on the situation. He has seen Colonel Beck in Warsaw on his way, and the less truculent Germans welcome his visit to the Free City, in the hope that it may help to calm passions. The intransigent Nazis, who prefer trouble to calm, have no wish to see the man who is the symbol of some other power than the Reich, and they naturally scout the suggestion that his purpose is to arrange some compromise. Meanwhile Danzig is ringed round with watchful Poles, ready for any sudden move on the Germans' part. At the moment there is no such general fear as there was of a military coup; but there is a good deal of talk in Germany of a "peaceful solution" of the problem. Hitler, in fact, is believed to have some plan up his sleeve for getting Danzig "by a twist" and without risking a

European war. It may be so, though whether it will work must depend primarily on Poland, which can be subjected to the kind of pressure that destroyed Czechoslovakia last September. The British may try to forget the fate of the Czechs; the Poles are daily reminded not only by Hitler's threats but by the arrival of Czech refugees who escape over the frontier which the Nazis had set them to fortify. The most distinguished of the recent arrivals is General Prchala of the Czech army, who proposes to organise a Czech refugee army. The Czechs are a tough people; they suffered under German rule for three hundred years; they regained their freedom in the war; they mean to regain it once more and they are already organising in the United States as well as in Eastern Europe.

Nazi Advance in Hungary

The general elections in Hungary have resulted in what looks like a big victory for the Government, which has secured 180 out of the 260 seats in the Chamber. But this is not the whole, or the most important part, of the story. The National Socialists have scored a triumph with the capture of 43 seats (40 more than they had in the old Parliament) and the ousting of the democratic groups of the Left and Centre. In Budapest, to the general surprise, the Nazis got 145,000 votes, the Government 132,000, and the Socialists and other opposition parties together 144,000. This, there is only too good reason to fear, is the shadow of things to come. An article on another page of this issue, written before the polls, explains who and what these Hungarian Nazis are. Their real significance, of course, is not that they are the Magyar branch, so to speak, of the Fascist family, with an organisation and aims similar to those of their cousins in Germany. They are Hitler's agents and fuglemen, and their progress reflects not merely the advance of Nazi ideology in Hungary, but the tightening hold of Germany on Hungary. Their present strength in the Parliament and in the country, formidable as it is, is likely, in the opinion of many political experts, to be increased before long by new adherents coming over from the extreme Right.

The Aaland Islands

The League Council at its closing meeting last Saturday had to shelve the question of the Aaland Isles. These islands were demilitarised as far back as 1921 by Finland. Now, in view of the present international situation—in plain words, of the German menace—the Finnish Government in agreement with Sweden wants the approval of the League for their refortification. That seems on the face of it a reasonable enough precaution. But, rather paradoxically, the Russians object. Mr. Maisky complained that the Soviet Government, which is vitally interested, had not been consulted in the matter, and did not really understand the object of the refortification. He added—what is the real explanation of Russia's attitude—that there appeared to be no adequate guarantees that the remilitarised islands would not be seized by "some aggressive Power." On that point at least the Russian fears cannot be dismissed as groundless. It would clearly be one of the first aims of the Germans, in the event of war, to bottle up the Soviet fleet in the Gulf of Finland, and the possession of the Aalands would put them in a strong position for such a move. After long discussion at Geneva it was evident that no compromise was possible, and all the Council could do was to put the facts on record, and leave it to the States directly concerned to settle the matter in their own way.

The German Homecoming from Spain

While the British Labour Conference at Southport was lamenting the destruction of the Spanish Republic, the Nazis in Hamburg were staging a welcome home to the German "volunteers" who have played their part in this tragedy. It is only now that the German public has learned how considerable that part was, and how early in the civil war it began. Throughout the struggle, whilst we were all supposed to be "non-intervening," and the Nazi press was constantly fulminating against Russian and French intervention, German infantry and artillery, German airmen and German aeroplanes, German military and naval instructors, were working hard for General Franco (and the German Reich) in Spain. And the business had begun as far back as July, 1936, within a week or two of the start of the war, when the German Government was denying that it was giving any assistance. A complete disclosure of all this and more is to-day coolly—not to say boastfully—offered to the German people. They are told everything, in fact, except the cost and the extent of the casualties. These were presumably not so heavy as those incurred by the Italians—which Mussolini long ago made a practice of publishing in Rome to stimulate the ardour of his subjects. The Italian legionaries also, or some of them, are at last going home. But we should be very surprised to learn that the day is near when there will be no Fascist soldiers in Spain except Spaniards, no foreign air-bases in the Balearics and elsewhere, no guarantees, in short, of the fruits of the dictators' victory.

The Problem of Palestine

Nobody expected that the announcement of the Government's new policy would result in a prompt restoration of law and order in Palestine—and it has not. Terrorist outrages and assassinations continue, and on Monday night one of the leaders of the Arab "Moderates" was shot dead after his party had expressed approval of the White Paper. Whether this National Defence Party really represents the great mass of the Arab opinion in Palestine, as it claims to do, is extremely doubtful; but it is pretty certain that the Mufti and his intransigents do not. At the same time it is folly to make light of the Nationalist movement, with its genuine grievances and its determination to have an independent State with the Arabs in a majority. Speakers at the Labour Conference this week, in their eagerness to assert Jewish rights, not only did a good deal less than justice to the Arab case, but painted a quite unrealistic picture of the situation in Palestine. It is absurd to talk of this bitter struggle as merely a conflict between a decaying feudal order and the new order for which Zionism stands. Peace and prosperity cannot be ensured by the simple method of removing all restrictions on Jewish immigration and repressing the Arabs. If a National Home for the Jews is to be secured in Palestine, as we hope it will, the most promising way is by the establishment of an autonomous

Jewish territory within a larger federal organisation, in which the Arabs both of Palestine and of neighbouring countries will also be masters in their own house.

French Socialist Differences

The French Socialist Party, in its Congress at Nantes, has been faced with profound differences between M. Blum, its leader, and M. Faure, its secretary. It is rent asunder on two distinct, but related, issues—pacifism and collaboration with other parties of the Popular Front. M. Blum, who believes in putting a policy of collective security in the forefront of the party activity, is against a blank refusal ever to collaborate with the Communists or other Left-wing groups; whereas M. Faure, with the support of the pacifists, wishes to assert the absolute independence of the Socialist Party and to discipline members who associate with Communists in auxiliary bodies regarded as working under Communist influence. On this issue M. Faure carried the Congress against M. Blum, and a serious rift seemed to have opened. This danger led to the appointment of a special committee with the function of mediating between the rival groups. The French Socialists fully realise that division in their ranks is calculated to endanger democratic liberties at home and to encourage aggression abroad. But there is a real dilemma; pacifism is much stronger in the French than it is in the British movement, and in France it is the pacifists who stand forward as the Simon Pure of Socialist independence of all alliances with other parties.

Armament and Poverty

Mr. J. G. Winant, the American who has succeeded Mr. Harold Butler as Director of the I.L.O., devotes a good deal of his first annual report to the difficulties involved in any process of scaling down armaments in Europe to a peace footing. He points out that, the further armaments encroach on the supply of labour and capital needed for normal production, the harder will it be to change back to peaceful activities without a prolonged period of severe unemployment and dislocation. He suggests that the I.L.O. staff ought to be set to work at once to work out plans for easing the transition when it comes, so as to make it easier for countries to contemplate a change of policy. How ill Europe can afford the present diversion of productive capacity to arms-making Mr. Winant brings out by means of some comparative figures of national income per head of population. The United States and Canada head his list with an average of about $1,400 per occupant person per year, as against about $1,000 for Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and Switzerland. Mr. Winant adds: "If in a country such as the United States, there is a 'submerged tenth', or a submerged fifth even, of families who are terribly poor, what can be said of the situation in countries where the average income is only a half or a quarter or a tenth of that of the United States? The great mass of mankind still live in a state of intolerable poverty."

Co-operators Protest

The annual Co-operative Congress at Margate has been on the whole a quiet affair. Since the London resolution in favour of a "Peace Alliance" had been withdrawn after its defeat at the Conference of the Co-operative Party, the delegates were left to discuss domestic issues which, however important, do not draw a large share of public attention. The Congress decided, on a Manchester motion, to employ no workers under 15 after the coming into force of the new Education Act. It expressed hopes that wages in the distributive trades would soon be subject to legal regulation, so as to establish a general system of minimum wage-rates. On the conscription issue, it joined with the Trade Unions in censuring the Government's breach of pledges, and decided to work for repeal as soon as possible. Mr. Neville, the Chairman, and other speakers drew attention to the huge increase brought about since 1931 in taxation levied on the necessaries of life. Customs and excise duties charged on the household budget amount this year to £140 millions. "Shops have become the counters of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and our staffs are among his principal tax-gatherers," said the Chairman. "In the case of the poorest of the poor," added Mr. Cameron Thompson of the Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society, "almost a quarter of the family budget goes in food taxes." One of the chief missions of Co-operators in these days is to keep alive the popular demand for cheap food, and the traditional opposition to monopolies designed to hold up food prices. It would be an excellent thing if their voice could be more effectively heard in Labour Party assemblies, as well as in their own Congress.

In Conference

Of other Whitsuntide Conferences, the various gatherings of teachers renewed their protest against the damage certain to be done to education by the "beneficial exemptions" accompanying the raising of the school-leaving age to fifteen. The head teachers were insistent in their demand for air-raid shelters at schools as a protection against daylight raiders. The Bank Officers, spurred on by the recent victory of the Scottish Bankers' Association, renewed their protests against the marriage ban on clerks earning less than a certain income. The Local Government Officers inveighed against the very low standards of pay still maintained by certain Councils, and discussed the possibility of organising the local government services throughout the country on Civil Service lines and subject to common standards of recruitment and promotion. This same Conference also called for a general system of civic teaching in schools, designed to remedy the existing ignorance and apathy of the ordinary citizen about problems of government and administration. At the Locomotive Engineers' Conference it was revealed that after the recent award rejecting the Trade Union claims a proposal for strike action as an alternative to further attempts at negotiation, was only rejected by a single vote. The British Legion, like the Trades Union Congress, called for further protection of men coming out of military training against victimisation or loss of employment. Finally, several Conferences gave expression to the widespread feeling against the present methods of selecting magistrates, and the continued prevalence of reaction and senility on many benches of magistrates.

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WHAT THE ALLIANCE WOULD MEAN

IF the promised alliance with Russia becomes a reality, what will it mean? It will mean that the programme of *Mein Kampf* has gone astray, that France will not be a German colony, that European nations will not fall in succession to a series of lightning wars and that future "conversations" with the dictators will be negotiations between equals and not repetitions of the Munich *Dictat*. It will mean that freedom cannot perish in Europe as it has perished in Czechoslovakia; that there is hope yet of relief from the bondage of Fascism and, since Hitler will not willingly face war on both fronts, it means that there is a better chance of peace. If it is considered merely as a military alliance to win a war, the object will be defeated. A "peace front" that is only a military alliance is a contradiction in terms.

The formation of this alliance would so far be only a negative step. How much or how little it could achieve to salvage a civilisation on the verge of ruin would depend in the long run upon our ability to erect a positive and civilian structure on this defensive foundation. But before we face that problem it is our duty, however repugnant it may be, to make sure that this military foundation is well and truly laid. We face an allied coalition closer than any that Europe has ever known in times of nominal peace, and we shall only have added to our peril if the influences that impeded the formation of the alliance also hold up the staff conversations and the co-ordination of policy without which the Reichswehr may still hope to surprise mutually suspicious and unready allies. The less doubt and the less secrecy there are in these arrangements the more effectively will they work to immobilise the aggressive Powers.

Europe is our first but not our sole concern. It is possible that Mr. Roosevelt's Note to the two dictators was a factor in staving off some major operations which may have been originally timed for the month of May. Mr. Cordell Hull's proposals for a revision of America's neutrality legislation are a proof that Washington has a long-sighted plan, and does propose to exert more than a moral influence for peace. His suggestions, while withholding America's credit from any belligerent and forbidding her ships and citizens to enter an "area of combat," would allow belligerents, for cash, in their own ships, to import not only supplies of raw materials and foods, but arms and munitions as well. Given our command of the sea, this means in effect that the resources of her soil and her industry would be available to ourselves, while they would be beyond the reach of our opponents. Whether the Administration can induce Congress to accept this policy of friendly and co-operative neutrality, and whether at need it might go even further, will depend on the view that American opinion forms of the real purpose of our alliance. We have to live down the disastrous impression made by our policy from Manchuria to Munich. Americans find it hard to believe even now in Mr. Chamberlain's will to resist, and they argue that if he should resist, his change of front will be inspired only by a self-regarding view of British imperial interests.

For that reason, then, as for many others, we must face the constructive political meaning of our defensive alliance. It must unhappily begin by building a material dyke against Nazi aggression, but from the start it must have other objects in view. It will be fatal even to our first purpose of defence if we are content to turn the allied countries into an armed camp. We are opposing an armed doctrine which begins by basing its politics and its morals on the national state or the racial group. It aims at power conceived in the crudest terms as the ability to dominate others by force. The more durable, the more intimate we can make our alliance, the more effective will it be as an answer to this disruptive Fascist nationalism. Military preparedness inevitably includes some measure of economic collaboration among the allies. Their ability to resist, if the test comes, will depend on the solidity of their economic and financial structure. As in the Great War, measures must be worked out in advance to co-ordinate all their sources of supply and transport. We would urge that this should be done not only or even chiefly to satisfy military needs, but rather in peace and for the sake of peace to draw the utmost benefit from the ideal of economic co-operation. The fear of war thrust us all back, in varying degrees, into the practice of economic self-sufficiency. The Grand Alliance, if we intend to make it permanent and hope one day to admit our adversaries, should reverse this direction. In particular the mischief of Ottawa has to be undone, and every vestige of monopoly stripped from our trusteeship over our tropical dependencies. We should aim immediately at closer social and cultural ties with our French and Russian allies. Means must be found to raise that nearly impenetrable curtain that hides Moscow from London.

On one aspect of such a policy Mr. Bevin dwelt in a notable speech at Southport. He urged that we should offer, on terms, all the advantages of economic collaboration to the Have-not Powers. That suggestion should be welcomed, but it calls for careful definition. Do we make offers to Japan while she is busy over the conquest of China? How do we "appease" Powers that turn every economic gain to the purposes of their power-politics? That, clearly, was not Mr. Bevin's meaning. You cannot tame the Fascist Powers under their present leadership merely by offers of economic advantage, though you should make an offer of a general settlement that the German and Italian peoples would rejoice to accept; if their leaders would allow it. The aim of the Dictators is not economic well-being. They are, by their doctrines and their discipline, incapable of taking their place loyally in any system of international co-operation. Their aim is power and national self-assertion. The proper strategy for the Grand Alliance, as we conceive it, has two stages or aspects. The first is negative and defensive. It must write "Finis" under the chronicle of Hitler's exploits. He has based his ascendancy over his own people and his mesmeric influence over his neighbours on an unbroken series of audacious successes at the expense of weaker States. When months and years go by, and even his partisans realise that nothing more is to be won by the sacrifices of material comfort and political freedom they now endure, then at length may we hope for a change in leadership. The second aspect of our policy should operate by example and by direct propaganda. It should make clear to the German people that our alliance is solely defensive. It should advertise

all the advantages, and more especially the economic advantages, that it confers on its members. It should be conceived not merely or chiefly as a military association for defence, but rather as a coalition for the maintenance of our common civilisation, which may one day evolve into an international Federation. Its benefits must be open to all who accept its principles. But these lie deeper even than disarmament and the renunciation of economic monopoly. They imply a readiness to transcend nationalism and the old-world conception of sovereignty.

LABOUR LAYS A GHOST

Southport, Wednesday

WHEN all is said and done, despite the block vote and all the other unfairnesses, the Labour Party is a democratic party. Though its leaders take the important decisions, they must keep in line with the sentiments of the rank and file. Whereas the ethic of the good Tory is loyalty to whatever policy his leaders recommend, Labour has an ideology of its own which every leader, whether of the Right or of the Left, must respect if he wishes to retain his leadership. This of course makes the party intensely conservative; its leaders cannot change front too quickly to meet a new situation, but must gradually adapt the traditional policy and permit the rank and file to settle down slowly and cumbrously to the changed circumstances. Mr. Chamberlain may switch overnight from appeasement to his form of collective security, but the Labour Party cannot perform such acrobatics with regard to conscription. If the leadership does not let the tail wag a little, it becomes a head without a body.

Party conferences are an essential feature of the life of the Labour Movement. But their purpose is not to enable the mandated delegates to take decisions and instruct the Executive. Even if the Trade Unions were not there, the decisions would still remain with the leadership. What conferences afford is an opportunity for the rank and file to register their reactions to *faits accomplis*, and for the leadership to observe from these reactions what concessions will be needed, either in phrasing or in sentiment, to keep the party together and to prevent a rival leadership from being formed.

In this respect Southport has not been an abnormal conference. Though the date was specially moved to Whitsun, in order to remove the appearance of acting under the instructions of the T.U.C.'s September meeting, once again the special meeting of T.U. Executives last month has virtually decided the Party line on the crucial issue of national service and opposition to conscription. When Zilliacus, making his first appearance in party politics, moved a resolution on Tuesday calling for non-co-operation in defence measures under Chamberlain, he got plenty of cheers. But in an unwary moment he fell into the trap set for him by a Trade Union interrupter who shouted "What would you do?" Zilliacus's reply advocating industrial action was drowned by angry cries of "Leave that to us" and "Mind your business"; and his motion was lost by 286,000 to 1,670,000 votes. Though the opposition blew off even more steam in Wednesday's debate on conscription and national service, the issue was never in doubt. Labour has accepted compulsory military service—under protest—and the leadership have sedulously sought to avoid any resolution which would bind them to repeal it when or if they come to power. They do not want in another election to face that deadly poster—"Labour war-mongering and weak: Conservative peaceful and strong."

All through Southport has been a pre-election conference, and here at least there is no evidence for the theory that Labour does not want power. On the contrary, meeting under the auspices of John Wilmot's Kennington victory, the Party has been preparing for the fight with an encouraging optimism, and with a willingness to sacrifice cherished sentiments and prejudices, and even principles. Pacifism, which was declining at Bournemouth, "has gone before" at Southport, to use the favourite phrase of George Dallas, a too benign Chairman, whose dexterous weakness on unimportant issues kept the delegates in good humour when they were steam-rollered on big ones. In Tuesday's foreign policy debate, the pacifist resolution moved by Bermondsey did not even produce a speech from George Lansbury; and I could not see more than twenty or thirty hands go up in support. Labour is clearly prepared not only to oppose aggression by resolution, but to co-operate in supplying the means of defence. It has become a national party in the fullest sense of the words. Outside South Wales and the Clydeside, its rank and file are far too active in national service to permit of an uncompromising opposition.

Does this mean that the Labour leaders are hand in glove with Chamberlain? Such allegations were made of course from the floor, but they did not carry conviction. As war preparations come to dominate industrial life, the differences for the working class between a Labour and Conservative administration become not less but more apparent. Granted that both parties were setting about the same job, the rank and file feels that we could do it more fairly. And the foreign policy debate showed that the Party had at last seen that an exclusive attention to international *politics* is not enough. A Labour foreign policy must not be simply a "League policy," but must include plans for social and economic reconstruction. If Labour takes the advice given it by Ernest Bevin in a statesmanlike speech and supplements pooled security with pooled wealth, it will have a foreign policy utterly distinct from Mr. Chamberlain's, and more Socialist than the political internationalism of Geneva days. On this point Southport marks an advance on previous conferences.

I have deliberately left the first to the last, and with good reason. Monday's desultory debate on the Cripps issue, with the overwhelming majority for expulsion, not only among the Unions but in the constituencies, was not part of the conference work, but an unpleasant preliminary. Although the Executive was anxious to suspend standing orders and permit him to be heard (it knew that if this happened the miners would support expulsion), there was considerable fumbling and hesitation before anyone could be found to propose this procedure. That in itself was an indication of the feeling of the conference. The issue was dead; those who could have stood up to the Executive were outside the hall; many who were friendly to Cripps had been alienated by the Petition campaign; and most of the rank and file were in a state of bored irritation. The difference from Bournemouth or Brighton was staggering.

Cripps must have felt this atmosphere himself, for his speech was utterly defeatist. Confining himself with almost pedantic narrowness to the principles of party discipline raised by his expulsion, he read fifteen typescript pages of self-defence. His speech was neither defiant nor conciliatory, and apart from a reference to his wealth, which was justified by the attacks made on him but merely antagonised the delegates, it fell completely flat. Collard, who supported him, made matters even worse by repeating the legalistic defence in an even more finicky way. The harshness of the comments upon Cripps were terrible for those of us who know his complete sincerity and devotion.

The puzzle is why he bothered to speak at all. For he only had two effective courses, either to say in conference what he has since written in his letter to Middleton—a sudden recantation might possibly have swung the delegates—or to deliver a last flaming indictment of the whole policy of the Party. Had he chosen the latter course, he would at least have made his exit in style. But as it was, he played the part not of the victim beside the block, but of a pale ghost returning from Hades and arguing that he was still alive. And friend and foe agreed that the ghost must be laid as quietly and hurriedly as possible. No one, except a delegate from

his constituency and a fellow-lawyer, could be found to support him. It is difficult to believe that he wished anyone to do so.

But the Cripps affair has had a profound effect not only here but on the Party as a whole. How big an effect, one can see by contrasting this conference with the other Southport conference four years ago. Then the Socialist League was a well-organised and well-led Left opposition, which held its own in a series of important debates on Socialist policy. Though most of its amendments were defeated, the delegates were glad that they were argued, and that the competence of the Executive could be tested in debate by men and women able to stand up to it in discussion. Since then, the Left opposition has liquidated itself. The Party likes to have a Left wing to challenge those in authority, and the Left has always received as much affection as anger from the rank and file. But a Left wing, in order to play its part, must be revolutionary, intimately in touch with social problems, strenuously fighting for the common man against the powers that be. Recently the Left has been losing this contact with the rank and file. By concentrating attention on a narrow tactical issue of pure politics, it has lost its glamour, and it was left to Harry Pollitt at a meeting outside the Conference to make a great revolutionary appeal to the masses. A Left may be fanatical and Utopian, but it must never be dull. That is the true diagnosis of Cripps's failure. He has not only antagonised the movement, but (far more deadly) he has bored it. Unfortunately the delegate for St. Albans summed up the feelings of everyone when he said, "The fact is we have wasted nine blasted months on this Popular Front."

It is the voluntary liquidation of the Left which has made this conference unique. For the first time the Executive is in supreme and unchallengeable control, and there are no first-rate debates because the first-rate debaters are either silent or all on one side. The Popular Front has made the rank and file suspicious of all criticism, and at Southport if the Executive said, $2 \times 2 = 7$, the floor would condemn as an intellectual anyone who suggested it equalled four. No wonder George Dallas can repeat at frequent intervals, "We are getting along very nicely," when the Parliamentary Party's report is passed without a single question!

After such a victory, the Executive has been wisely magnanimous. Hugh Dalton, in his skilful reply to Cripps, did not forget to hand a bouquet to Harold Laski for his loyalty, and thus to ensure his re-election; and it is rumoured that official representations were made to Mellor, who is in high favour for his disagreement with Cripps's latest moves, to form an opposition and keep the debates alive. But the conference is in "yes-man" mood. Even on the Spanish issue, a reasoned amendment, mildly criticising the Executive's lethargy, was overwhelmingly defeated, and the Executive's resolution (moved by Ellen Wilkinson) was unanimously approved.

This situation, provided it is temporary, has its good side. The party has been haunted far too long by the ghosts of dead issues and by living personal feuds, and is relieved to be rid of them, especially in an election year. What is serious is the loss of personnel and the absence of a dynamic and constructive Left wing. If we are to have such a movement, its leaders (and I hope they would include those who are at present expelled) would do well to learn by the mistakes of the I.L.P., the Socialist League and the Popular Front. The Left is dead. Long live the Left!

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

HITLER AND HUNGARY

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT RECENTLY IN BUDAPEST]

THOUGH the German border is still some eighty miles from Budapest, for all practical purposes the city has already gone the way of Vienna and Prague. Politically and economically Hungary is being run from Berlin, and at any moment Budapest could be occupied by the German troops stationed on the old Austro-Hungarian frontier.

Hungary's subordination to the foreign policy of Berlin needs no demonstration. By signing the Anti-Comintern pact and withdrawing from the League she has openly admitted it. But when it comes to internal politics, the facts are less well known. There are several Fascist parties in Hungary. The "Hungarist" party is now illegal, and its leader, Major Szalasy, is in jail for three years. Immediately after this setback, the same group formed another party, called it the "Hungarian National Socialist Party" and proceeded with exactly the same work as the illegalised "Hungarists." There is a third party called the National Front Party, which is very similar in its programme and make-up. The Hungarian National Socialist Party is by far the most important of the trio. It has a daily newspaper, the *Madyarsag*, whose editor, Hubay Miklos, is one of the most important Fascist leaders in Hungary. I went to the large well-furnished headquarters of this Nazi party, and spoke with several of its leaders. They claimed 100,000 paying members in Budapest alone and "thousands of others, particularly in the army." The Party is run and financed from Berlin.

The Hungarian Nazis have a programme similar to that of their German backers: "Free Hungary from the scourge of the Jews, make Hungary great again, and (more strongly emphasised than in Germany) land to those who work it." This last point has a special demagogic appeal owing to the feudal character of Hungarian agriculture; and they recently introduced a land law in Parliament. There it met with the united hostility of the upper house, who are mostly big landowners, and naturally resent any suggestion of giving land to the landless peasantry at the expense of the feudal aristocracy. The same thing has happened to their sweeping anti-semitic legislation. This actually passed the lower house, but the upper house made objections since so many of the nobility have Jewish blood in their veins. It is agreed, however, in most circles that both these laws will shortly be passed, since it is realised that if the Hungarians cannot run the country to suit Hitler, Hitler will find it necessary to take charge himself.

Naturally there is considerable popular resentment against this foreign-run Nazi party, and the authorities are ostensibly opposed to it. Actually, however, the police let all three Fascist parties pretty much alone, while they rigorously persecute the Communists. Dery Tobor, for instance, who is a well-known writer, is serving three months in jail for translating *Return from the U.S.S.R.*, by André Gide. The book was referred to as insidious Communist propaganda masked as objective criticism. At the same time Hitler's *Mein Kampf* was translated and published by the Nazis and no one was ever indicted. The Nazis have very strong units in the police, so that they can post illegal posters, and distribute leaflets without fear of getting into trouble, while the Communists get months and years in jail for the same things.

The Nazis are hoping that Hitler will let them run Hungary, and not occupy it as he did Czechoslovakia. If he does, however, there is little doubt that they will co-operate with the invaders. When asked what he would do in this event Hubay said: "If Hungary's independence is endangered, we shall be there"; but he refused to state whether this meant that he would fight.

Industrially and commercially Germany is running Hungary. In the first quarter of 1939 Germany took 95 per cent. of Hungary's meat export, 88 per cent. of the hogs, and 75 per cent. of the grain. At the same time Hungary is flooded with German manufactured goods. Many plants and factories have been forced to close down, so that Germany can sell the Hungarians its manufactured goods. In this way the 11 million pengö active foreign trade balance in March, 1938, had turned into a 0.5 million passive balance for March, 1939. If the Hungarian manufacturers object to this extermination, they are faced with the alternative of invasion.

Germans arrive in Budapest every day, and are occupying important places in finance, commerce and industry. On the occasion of the "Foire de Budapest" at the end of April,

a commission of some thirty German officials and business men came to investigate the industrial capacity and the state of organisation of Hungarian industry.

Whatever the Germans want, the Hungarians will do, hoping thereby to maintain their relative independence, as a nation. But what does the man on the street in Hungary think of this state of affairs? The Jews (there are about 600,000 in Hungary, and about 200,000 in Budapest) are nervous, and making attempts to get out before it is too late. Their problem is where to go, and how to get anything but the clothes on their backs out of Hungary. Some of them would like the war to start now, while Roosevelt is still President; all of them realise that if Hitler comes they will lose everything they have immediately, and if he does not come, they will be exterminated economically by degrees. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that most of the Jews are in business, something like 80 per cent. of the commerce of the country being in Jewish hands, and between 20 per cent. and 30 per cent. of the banking. Thus if the Nuremberg laws should be applied, a great deal of commercial and industrial property would immediately be subject to confiscation.

Hungarian business men are helpless. A prominent Hungarian editor said to me: "We will have a try at running business, but we can't compete with either the Germans or the Jews. We are always a little tired, and we are too intelligent to work day and night, and make ourselves into machines." As for the peasants, they work hard under any system, and have little to eat. Their main interest is in the land; and by promising land to the landless, the Nazis win a good deal of support among them. Any mention of German occupation, however, makes them boil with indignation. They still feel vaguely that Germany dragged them into the last war, and so was responsible for their country's dismemberment. They do not want that again.

There are about 600,000 Germans living in Hungary. Many of these are "Schwab" Germans, and although their dialect is almost unintelligible to a German, they feel themselves full-blooded—and, moreover, ill-treated—Germans. I spent a day in a little "Schwab" village of Budakeszi, half a dozen miles south-west of Budapest, with 1,200 inhabitants, of whom only one family are Hungarians, and a German school. The whole population feel that their cultural rights as Germans are not respected by the Hungarians, and would welcome a German occupation of Hungary as a liberation. Indeed, the general attitude of these "Schwab" Germans is very similar to that of the Sudeten Germans in the summer of 1938 and a good deal more justifiable.

The attitude of the big landlords is a little like that of the Jews, with whom so many of them have direct racial connections. They would like to leave, but they cannot sell their estates, or get the money out of the country even if they did sell them. They foresee their extermination as a ruling class at the hands of Hitler, but are too weak and impotent to do anything about it.

Everyone with whom I spoke agreed on two points. First, that any military resistance to a German invasion would be suicide and should not even be contemplated; and second, that France and England are not to be trusted to help Hungary in any way.

There are two interesting questions about which the more energetic and better informed Hungarians think a good deal. The first is the Ukrainian question.

Germany has spent a great deal of time and money during the past year on the Ukrainians, and fostered a movement for the "Great Ukraine" with the obvious intention of creating a new colony, and a supply base for the German army. During the whole performance the Ukrainians were promised complete independence. Then, in March, Hungary was permitted to take Ruthenia (Carpathian Ukraine). The Hungarian army marched in over the bodies of hundreds of patriotic but almost unarmed Ukrainians and the Germans said nothing. The Ukrainians are naturally furious with the Germans for allowing Ruthenia to be swallowed up, for their dream of Greater Ukraine seems to be indefinitely postponed—unless Germany expects to swallow Hungary in the very near future. This situation is enough to convince many Hungarians that the weeks, perhaps even the days, of Hungarian independence are numbered. The Hungarian Nazis, incidentally, maintain that the Ruthenians are not Ukrainians at all, but semi-Hungarians, who have been longing, for twenty years, to return to Hungary.

Italy seems to be the only possible protector, since a German occupation of Hungary would be a serious blow to Mussolini. The Austrian *Anschluss* was bad enough, and it is felt in Hungary that Mussolini will be forced by Italian public opinion to do all he can to prevent the next step. Whether he can do anything effective is another question.

By and large, the conclusions which I reached as the result of my visit are as follows:

1. Germany could take Hungary any time she wanted to, without any serious resistance from Hungary itself.
2. For the moment there is no reason (except possibly the need of internal propaganda in Germany) for this occupation, because Hungary is already thoroughly in the hands of Berlin.
3. Nevertheless, within a few months, possibly in August, Germany may find it expedient to occupy Hungary (either after, or concurrently with, the occupation of Croatia) for strategical reasons and for purposes of internal propaganda in Germany.
4. This move might change the relations between Italy and Germany, definitely establishing Italy as a German vassal, if not as a German colony.

A LONDON DIARY

THE unemployed, in their last winter's agitation, tried to follow two principles—first, only to carry out stunts that were directly connected with their grievances, and secondly to time them so as not to annoy the public but to rouse its sympathy. If they burst on to a football field with posters saying FOUL PLAY BY THE U.A.B. they waited till the interval; when they arrived as uninvited guests at a Food and Wine Society dinner the banquet had been reported as costing £10 a head, which was an adequate contrast to 17*s.* a week unemployment relief. The I.R.A. seem to be following exactly the opposite policy. Their actions have no obvious connection with Ireland's wrongs, and they are calculated to cause the maximum irritation. To throw stink bombs and tear gas bombs during the showing of innocuous films has nothing whatever but a nuisance value; one wonders what results are hoped for. A parallel with the suffragettes is misleading, for surely no I.R.A. leader can believe that the British public will be terrified by these means into forcing the Protestant counties into Eire, whereas there was a real possibility of harrying the Liberals into giving women the vote. The total effect so far seems to have been *nil*, though perhaps a few more people are inclined to pick quarrels with Irish whom they meet at work. Some observers think that for once, perhaps, the usual nonsense about "foreign gold" may not be wholly nonsense, and a phrase of Mr. de Valera's confirmed the view that the I.R.A. have been at least encouraged by the Nazis. If subscriptions had been received from quarters which demanded "to see results," this sort of random and useless damage might be a consequence. For the explosions bear all the marks of the work of men who are unwilling to kill or carry on a serious war to oblige their backers, but do not mind being serious pests.

* * *

Little news of Spain reaches the British public now. The best source is the *Voice of Spain*—a very well-informed weekly bulletin, published by United Editorial Ltd. (11 Great Turnstile, W.C.1). Much of the news that is available is simply not printed in Britain—partly, I suppose from some sense of shame and partly as a result of the natural desire of the Government and of Government inspired newspapers to

foster the illusion that all goes well in Spain and that Franco may still be bought out of the Axis and British policy justified. That there is more news one discovers sometimes in the French press. Take this from the *Temps* of May 18th.

> This morning was carried out the death sentence on Eliseo Gomez Fernandez (ex-deputy of the Republican Left), José Cerezo, Antonio Leal, Antonio Guidau, Antonio Ibañez, Juan Sala, Francisco Bailon, José Martinez, José Rodriguez, and Juan Olivet, who were particularly well-known Reds.
>
> The arrest during the night is also announced of M. José Maria Perez Aguila, Radical ex-deputy, and M. Ramon Planeye, provincial head of the Communist party and Political Commissar to the republican Army of the Levante.

I have not seen the above or similar significant items in the English press. Certain evidences received privately suggest that the Francoists are proceeding with a campaign of murder and torture similar to that which followed Hitler's triumph in Germany, but that, not relishing the world revulsion which that caused, the Spanish Fascists are merely taking precautions against news leaking out. The punishment of "opinion" is legalised by the Law of Responsibilities which was published at Burgos on February 9th and summarised soon afterwards in this journal. It sets up Tribunals which imprison for fifteen years and confiscate all property of people with the wrong ideas or who have in the past worked for ideas that the Fascists do not approve. Names of the dead in a message from Gerona include that of Professor Carlos Rahola, a well-known non-party Catalan historian, and the same message, giving names, speaks of returned Fascist heroes whipping their enemies in the street. From Perthus in France comes a curious note; the soldiers of the victorious army are deserting in considerable numbers, forty arriving in one day by mountain paths. The reason they generally give is hunger; for civilians conditions are said to be even worse, wages being now so very low and the relief distributed by the old ladies and señoritas of the Auxilio Social being accompanied by conditions of great personal servility. This refers to loyal or indifferent families: "ex-Reds" when allowed to live must shift for themselves. The message adds that conditions vary; where the priest and the returned Fascists are benign, conditions are not indeed good, but have been allowed to lapse more quietly into the traditional Spanish mixture of hunger, dirt and indifference.

* * *

The other day I came across a case of a woman who had long been paying 17*s.* 6*d.* a week for a house whose rent was legally restricted and which should have been 12*s.* 6*d.* When the landlord was tackled on the point he admitted the "error" and calculated that he owed her about £25—a very large sum out of a working-class income. I mentioned this case to a friend of mine who is a housing expert. I was told that such cases are very frequent. Landlords disregard the Rent Restriction Acts, assuming that if they do get found out they can refund the money without fear of prosecution. But why without fear of prosecution? Because poor people in this country are afraid of the law and ignorant of their rights wherever there are not active Tenants' Associations and Poor Man's Lawyers.

* * *

I have been reading with some dismay the "Peace Service Handbook" which the Peace Pledge Union publishes as a guide to the pacifists in a world of war. Let me say at once that I believe that people whose moral repugnance to fighting is deep and strong are right in looking for a form of work in which they believe they can maintain the things they value even during a war. I do not blame Aldous Huxley and Gerald Heard for trying to found a new community in America, though I think the effort to escape from the society in which one lives is a delusion, and that the Quakers, through long experience of trying to live a Christian life in an unchristian world, have found a better compromise. But when pacifists to-day talk about politics they often become traitors to the very things they stand for. Presumably they do not want to help the Nazis, but there are passages in this Handbook which are the best possible grist for Goebbels' mill and amongst the bodies listed in which it is suggested that pacifists may usefully work for international friendship is that notorious organisation, the *Link!* At the present time Goebbels is making a very careful survey of British public opinion to find out how far Germany may safely go in its work of destroying freedom (including the freedom to preach pacifism) in Europe, and it is pathetic that people who talk about the rights of the individual and liberty of conscience should take an active share in helping the worst military tyranny Europe has ever known. The sincere pacifist should state his own view as an individual and avoid recommending courses of action whose results he cannot estimate. Some people are so frightened of having any responsibility for war that they accuse others who wish to prevent it of warmongering and apparently feel no responsibility if the effect of their own efforts is to increase the likelihood of war. It is a curious thing that people do not feel negative responsibility, though, I suppose, it is really as great as positive responsibility. Judging from some pacifist statements I have come across recently, most of the harm is done from ignorance. Sometimes pacifists speak with a complacency that is in striking contrast to the attitude of experienced Quakers who know the irreparable damage which has been done to the human values that pacifists are supposed to stand for by the German conquest of Austria and Czechoslovakia.

* * *

I have in front of me a very useful publication which is particularly topical at a moment when the alliance with Russia seems probable. It is a 3*d.* document produced by the Union of Democratic Control (34 Victoria Street, S.W.1) called *A Peace Front and the Axis Powers*. It contains facts and figures about the size of navies and air forces and about the distribution of raw materials among the "Haves" and "Have-nots." People will get a misleading impression of the situation, as this pamphlet says, if they merely add up the resources of the two *blocs*; strategic advantage, the will to victory, the cross currents of class feeling—what the *Arrow* well called the other day the "fifth international of the well-to-do"—and many other factors, must be considered before any real estimate of comparative strength is possible. But here, very simply presented, are the most important facts and figures you need if you are trying to think out how far we are helping the armaments of the Axis Powers, what bargains we might make with them and how we might organise co-operation amongst ourselves.

* * *

One of the most ominous words to which we have lately had to grow accustomed is *Lebensraum*, and my eye picked it out with some surprise in glancing over the maps in the monumental new standard work on German birds, the *Handbuch der Deutschen Vogelkunde*, which has taken eight German ornithologists five years to complete. The *Lebensraum* in question stretched from Scandinavia to central Africa, and it was a shock to find that this mighty tract of the earth is shared, not, as one might suppose, between the democratic *bloc* and the Rome-Berlin Axis, but between two birds only 6½ inches long, the Nightingale and his close relative the Sprosser. The Sprosser is the eastern bird, but includes in its *Lebensraum* all the territories bordering the Baltic including the Baltic coast of Germany. Our own Nightingale takes over westward and southwards of Poland and Hungary, but the Nightingales, like the Powers, seem uncertain to whose *Lebensraum* such countries as Rumania and Jugoslavia belong. In any case, although we owe the wonderful songs of these two birds to their jealousy among themselves over individual territories there is no hint yet that the minority of Nightingales in West Poland is likely to receive sought or unsought aid from the big battalions farther west against the intolerable oppression of the Sprosser majority. So primitive are these birds that they hardly seem aware of the grave racial problem so clearly charted by the *Handbuch*. They even ignore the colonial problem, both using different parts of tropical Africa to winter in. It just shows how uncivilised Nightingales are. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to T.D.
All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

If I thought that any of my employees hated me, I should have retired long ago.—Lord Nuffield.

A Conservative Government can change its policy completely and still remain in office. The Socialist Party will never expand till the minds of its leaders become as elastic.—*Daily Express.*

He (the Archbishop of Canterbury) said that any discussion on the policy which the Papacy from time to time saw fit to adopt was irrelevant. There was a clear distinction between policy and prayer. —*News Chronicle.*

Mother's Help wanted, able to sew and mend and cut out, type-write, able to turn out a room and take out invalid daughter to Hyde Park for a walk and read to her, and make newly born babies' clothes; live in; £1 per week; artist's house, London.—*Times.*

Wimbledon news is all front page stuff this week. Tragedy enters, though, with the passing of *Mick the Miller* and concern of lesser degree also attends the story of *Ballyhennessy Sandhills'* relegation to the stud.—*What's On.*

[The success of "This England" column depends entirely on our readers. During the last fortnight they have apparently decided to suggest on too little evidence that England is becoming un-English or unquotable, while they persist in sending us a large number of quotations from Hitler and Mussolini and in trying to persuade us that anything with which they disagree is suitable for this column. May we again remind them that the test of a "This England" item is that it illustrates some Anglo-Saxon attitude? Also that they should send in complete cuttings and avoid intentional jokes.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

NOT SUCH A BAD TIME

A GERMAN correspondent in London, I see, discovered an absence of the holiday spirit in England this Whitsuntide. He noticed that people were depressed; that the Russian business was weighing on their spirits; and that, as a result of this, they were not going about their customary holiday pleasures. He must have had very good eyesight. I spent the week-end in England and did not see a single cloud due to the Russian situation on a human face. My eyes are not so good as they used to be, and to me nearly everybody looked extraordinarily happy. It is true that a farmer whom I met, watching a game of cricket on a village green was not altogether a Pangloss, but he was not worrying about Russia. He was worrying over the loss of his pigs. They had been unaccountably attacked by swine-fever, and he had been compelled by law to kill his boar, his two sows, and their young—sixty-two pounds' worth of stock in all—and to bury them three feet deep without being given a farthing of compensation. He had also had two geese run down and killed by a motor-cyclist, and for these too he had been refused compensation on the ground that geese had no legal right to be on a common. I agreed with him that he had been unjustly treated, but, even in an unjust world, he stayed on to enjoy the cricket in the sunshine.

As for all the other people, their conversations seemed invariably to begin with the words, "Lovely day!" and, when you hear Englishmen calling out "Lovely day!" to each other as they meet, you may be sure that they are happy. Not once did I hear a pessimist reply: "We'll pay for this later." Under the blue sky, every man, woman and child was living in and for the golden moment. All time except the present was forgotten. Light and song and bloom had returned to the earth in full tide. A poet addicted to melancholy might, perhaps, have found cause for sadness in the dimming bluebell pools and the fading lilac; but even he, looking at the spread of buttercups in the fields and on the commons and the rich white of the hawthorn hedges and the chestnut blossom, would have had to admit that Nature was giving in at least as great a measure as she was taking away.

I doubt whether any more beautiful day ever broke upon the world than Whit Monday. It was a day on which the whole earth and everything in it was steeped in light. A nimbus of light was on the head of every child who stopped at the pond to watch the ducks. The sheep in the fields were bordered with light. In the late afternoon the bat in the batsman's hands flashed as dazzlingly as a sword in sunlight. A fieldsman ran after the ball and the soles of his shoes might have been made of silver, so brightly did they reflect the light of day. Who at such a time could have felt depressed about European politics? Who could have remembered that such things existed?

The older men watched the cricket and remembered the cricket of their boyhood. One of them recalled how Sunday used to be the great day for cricket, as there was no Saturday half-holiday then. Another commented that there were no motor-coaches in those days to carry the players to neighbouring villages, and that they used to go on foot, carrying their bags with them. It was generally agreed, too, that cricket was more closely associated with beer then than it is to-day, and that a late sing-song in the local inn was not the least enjoyable part of the game. It was about these things, and not about the state of Europe, that I heard men talking during the week-end.

Even the ardent young politicians who called on us scarcely mentioned politics. While in the open air, at least, they talked of tulips, lupins, and the orange Siberian wallflowers which have never been more brilliant. They talked of the greater spotted woodpecker they had seen in the bluebell wood. They talked with envy of the next-door garden in which the beans are already in flower. They talked a little scandal. They talked to the cat. They talked about Toscanini. They talked about landladies and badgers and nightingales. It was as though they were living in a world in which Herr Hitler was only an unimportant picture on a wall. I thought on Monday that I had never seen the human race looking happier. The sun seemed to have touched everybody to a nobility of good nature and cheerfulness.

Nor do I believe that this happiness was merely assumed or that the people I met were deliberately suppressing their anxieties about the future. Anxiety is an abnormal condition in a healthy human being, and enjoyment of the present, where possible, is his natural state. Even under a clouded sky women enjoy a cup of tea; and set a man opposite a pot of beer and he will forget even a European crisis for at least ten minutes. This is not a mark of escapism but of thirst for normal life. It is these recurrent crises that are a sign of ill health. That is why the ordinary man is glad to be rid of them and of the thought of them even for a week-end. That ash-tree not yet so covered with leaves as to hide its lovely bones has survived many a crisis and will outlive many another. It, and not Herr Hitler, belongs to the permanent scheme of things. We have unfortunately to devote a good many of our thoughts to Herr Hitler, but it would be foolish not to remember at times that he is only a passing phenomenon and not to be able to forget him for a week-end at least as the leaves spread over the ash-tree towards the end of May. The English race, it seems to me, forget him with admirable completeness during Whitsuntide.

If the German correspondent I have quoted had called on me during the week-end, he would have found only one anxious visitor. But even this visitor was not anxious about Russia. His anxiety was due to his doubt whether a horse called Hunter's Moon IV would beat a horse called Tricameron in a race at Hurst Park. It was because of this that he asked me to turn on the six o'clock news on the wireless. He waited patiently through the weather-report, through the account of King George's quiet day among the Rocky Mountains, through statistical accounts of the holiday motor-car traffic, through

the news from abroad, and did not prick up his ears till the sports bulletin began. As the news of horses began to be read out, his features assumed a careworn expression, half of hope and half of fear. Then, at the head of the first three in one of the races, came the name that lighted up his soul and his face, "Hunter's Moon." "A great horse," he said, as if this were the moment he had lived for, his peak of Everest. Even when the announcer went on to say that Tricameron had come in first but had been disqualified, his sense of triumph was not abated. He had backed a winner, and what else mattered? It was a world worthy of its hawthorns and its nightingales.

On Sunday another visitor called, equally happy in his boastfulness. He was not openly boastful, but, as he was leaving, he announced in a casual tone that, sitting in his garden in the afternoon, he had solved the Torquemada puzzle and the other crossword puzzle in the *Observer*, and had got half-way through the *Sunday Times* crossword before it was time to go out for a drink at the Popinjay. He had solved the Torquemada puzzle, he said, in an hour. As the day was so beautiful, I had myself sat in the garden trying to solve the Torquemada puzzle and had made a disastrous mess of it; and I felt that, if any man in England had a right to feel proud, my friend had. It is possible to pick a winner on the racecourse by chance; but it is not possible to solve a Torquemada puzzle except by intellectual power. If the German correspondent had been present, I think I could have introduced him to at least one man who was enjoying a normally glad Whitsuntide.

England, in fact, was a country in which there were a thousand reasons for being happy during the week-end. Pine-covered hills were as blue in certain lights as the blue hills of Antrim or the west-of-Ireland mountains of Mr. Paul Henry. The leaves of the oaks drinking in the sunlight above shadowy depths were as bright as flowers. The anti-English cynic who called the oak "the cauliflower tree" can never have seen an oak in leaf at the end of May. The pond, too, became a duodecimo edition of the sea as it reflected the blue sky. The very ducks on it, doomed to a brief existence, were forgetful of the morrow and happy. Perhaps the German correspondent, if he had been there, could, with his keen sight, have discerned signs of depression in the ducks. I couldn't. To me it seemed that they, like everybody else, were having the time of their lives.

Y. Y.

THE ENGLISHMAN'S CASTLE

SINCE the war, a very large number of English families, hitherto living in overcrowded slums, have been re-housed in what are popularly known as Council flats. This re-housing has cost a terrible lot of money. Have we, or the occupants of the flats, got value for the money spent? How many of my readers, with wives and children of their own, not forced to choose between such a flat and a bug-ridden hovel in a slum area, would deliberately select as a home the average Council tenement? I do not wish to underestimate the value of the re-housing work that has been done; but few who have seriously thought about the problem in a personal, human way could possibly feel complacent as to the results so far achieved. If we are content to consider the business of home-building in the terms of an old-fashioned textbook of hygiene, oblivious of the fact that men, women and children have needs other than cleanliness, neatness and orderliness, then the average Council flat, like the modern prison-cell and the modern infirmary ward, represents a tremendous advance on the average industrial worker's house as it existed in the time of Queen Victoria. But the hygienic man, woman, or child is as imaginary as is the economic man or the unicorn.

For the most part, the Council flats have been well built, and their plumbing is sanitary—to say nothing of being wastefully extravagant. For people who merely want somewhere to sleep and to have a meal in privacy, or to read a book, or to listen to the wireless, they are good enough, though, for the amenities provided, expensive. As time goes on, the new flats tend to get a little better, but they still fall ridiculously short of what should be the minimum standard of an English family home.

The days of "good enough for the working classes" are over; "good enough for twentieth-century English people" must be the new test.

"Yes, my dear man, but you are talking about Utopia. We've got to deal with the facts as they are and the situation as it is." All right; then travel to Sweden, or Holland, or to what is left of Vienna; or, if those places are too far away, take a bus to Ladbroke Grove and have a look at Kensal House.

Going by bus from central London to Kensal House you pass a large new block of Council flats which can fairly be pronounced not bad. I feel sure that their interiors are far more hygienic, far tidier, and, domestically, far more convenient than were the slum houses and tenements from which the occupants of the flats have been, or will be, drafted. Externally, the building rather brightens the dingy neighbourhood in which it has been erected. A little further on, you are confronted by a block of so-called dwellings, about as dingy in aspect and, I am informed, as dreary within, as anything the industrial revolution has produced. Then you come upon the Kensal House Estate. It gives a first impression comparable with that produced by the sudden emergence of the sun on a dull, cloudy day. The mind is transferred from the squalid buildings of poorer London to the new and pleasant architecture of certain working-class districts of Amsterdam or Stockholm. There stands before us a new sort of human village—a village in a town. The sight cheers one as does a clear and coherent idea; it seems, indeed, to embody an idea—a conception of the real needs of a human society.

At this point, let me give some account of the inception of Kensal House. Credit must, first of all, be given to its founders, a great commercial undertaking—The Gas Light and Coke Company, and to its principal director, Sir David Milne Watson. It seems likely that the idea first took shape with a view to showing that gas is an economical fuel and illuminant; and the experiment might well have taken the form of a block of sanitary working-class flats on the lines of the usual Council buildings—with gas and coke stoves installed instead of electric light and coal fires. But, fortunately, some imaginative person thought the chance too good to be wasted, and a more ambitious goal was set up.

Here it is impossible for me to be both truthful and impersonal. In addition to the first-rate architects consulted, somebody suggested that the personnel of the planning board should be supplemented by the addition of a woman familiar with the actual interests and wants of English working people. Accordingly, Miss Elizabeth Denby was asked to co-operate with the architects; and I think that they would agree with me that it is very largely, if not mainly, to her that we owe many of those features of the Kensal House experiment that distinguish it from any comparable enterprise in this country.

Some three years ago, Miss Denby read before the Royal Institute of British Architects a remarkable and stimulating paper on "Rehousing from the Slum Dweller's Point of View." It is the only occasion on which a woman has been invited to address the R.I.B.A. The sentiments she expressed were, from the ordinary architect's and public official's point of view, heterodox; and not all her hearers were convinced by her arguments. But they all agreed that she had given them plenty to think about. The main point of her thesis was that, although rehousing is necessary, and although the sanitary condition of our slums is appalling, we are wasting millions of pounds on the wrong sort of rehousing; and that although we are getting rid of a lot of evil, we are at the same time unnecessarily getting rid of nearly as many desirable human goods. Incidentally, she held that we are helping to destroy the desirable national characteristics of the average Englishman. Last year, Miss Denby published a valuable and highly interesting book,

called *Europe Rehoused*; and from that book I will quote parts of a passage illustrative of her point of view:

> We must realise that, although the housing problem is national, solutions must be local. Two things are essential—really informed and sensitive official standards of urban planning and of taste, and adequate protection of the community against land speculation. . . . We do not want "community centres" with their flavour of patronage and "social service" which are to-day being sponsored in Great Britain; nor "educational settlements" where people, exhausted after a heavy day's work, are supposed to improve their tired minds—but places for exercise, free companionship and family enjoyment. . . . Why should anyone try to "do good" to citizens who happen to be below a certain income level? Is it perhaps a guilty conscience? Once we were known as "Merry England." If there *is* a crime against the poor to be expiated is it the theft of gaiety? . . . Where have we, one of the greatest nations in the world, gone wrong? What has happened to our wealthy cities to make them so hideous? . . . Beauty with us is too often sacrificed to utilitarian ends and financial gain. Numbers, output, is our blinding passion. . . . At the root of the trouble may be this—an industrial city is looked upon as a place in which everything is subordinated to money-making; only the unfortunate live there. Money is spent in it but not on it. . . . Possibly, too, we in Great Britain to-day are still dominated by the tradition of the man who said, "Where there's muck there's money," and proceeded with vigour and success to make both. . . . Good housing is not the absence of slums any more than good health is the absence of disease. Slum clearance . . . is not merely a question of substituting a clean box for a dirty one. . . .

To return to Kensal House; here is a summary of the more important relevant facts, all checked by my personal observation and inquiry.

Kensal House was built in strict conformity with the terms of the Housing Acts, as to permitted areas, financial arrangements, and choice of tenants. The tenants actually were nominated by the Kensington Borough Council from its slum clearance areas. Thus Kensal House qualified for subsidy, and is in all respects comparable economically with other publicly operated housing schemes. Rents have been fixed at a level adequate to cover cost, including the return upon capital borrowed.

The site selected (at the junction of Ladbroke Grove with the Great Western Railway) is a roughly triangular estate of 1½ acres belonging to the Gas Light and Coke Company. There are 68 flats, 54 with three bedrooms and 14 with two bedrooms, built on a wide curve in two blocks running north and south so as to permit morning sun to reach bedrooms facing east, and afternoon sun to reach living rooms facing west.

The terrace and the two lawns for the grown-ups are between the two blocks of houses (after the manner of a college quadrangle) well away from the noise of the children's games. There is also a roof garden.

Facing south is the Nursery School, built in a semi-circle following the line of the old gas-holder site; and facing south and west is a circular playground for older children, the actual site of the former gas-holder.

The flats were planned on labour-saving lines, for families of five or more persons, at rentals, according to number of bedrooms, of 9*s*. 6*d*. and 11*s*. 6*d*. a week, including rates. Each flat has a living-room, two or three bedrooms, a kitchen, a bathroom, a large family balcony, and a small specially ventilated balcony for drying clothes; whilst, on the street level, there is allotted to each a lock-up large enough to hold a pram and a bicycle. Each flat is wired for a loud speaker.

An open coke fire lit by gas has been installed in each living-room; there is a gas-fire in the principal bedroom and a gas point in each of the smaller bedrooms. An Ascot water-heater, fixed on the partition wall between kitchen and bath-room, provides instantaneously heated water to sink, copper and bath. A gas cooker with modern hot-plate and automatic oven-control, and a movable wash copper, are in each kitchen; a point is provided for a gas iron. I found that the average weekly cost of heating and lighting works out at 4*s*. 6*d*. a flat.

In planning the flats, all unnecessary passage space has been eliminated to enable the living-room to be as large as possible. Window boxes, holding two feet of earth and well drained, are built in the concrete of the balconies. The living-rooms and balconies face west, and receive the afternoon sun. The window of each living-room extends the full width of the room, and a door opens straight on to the balcony. The playground for older children is equipped with apparatus for various games and sports. There were several trees already on the estate, but additional ones have been planted, and pleasant gardens laid out.

The first-rate nursery school for children between two and five, included in the estate, has accommodation for sixty children, and is run in collaboration with the Board of Education and the L.C.C. Children resident in the flats are given priority, but any vacancies are filled from the over-crowded families in the immediate neighbourhood. The classrooms provide for the division of these children into three age groups, and I was struck by the amazing difference in aspect—physical and emotional—between the children of the three-to-four and four-to-five groups, on the one hand, and many of those in the two-to-three group, on the other. The development in physical healthiness and mental alertness and interest, evidently attributable to the influence of the nursery school, is remarkable. The mental training is roughly on Montessori lines, and the children, who may be brought as early as eight in the morning, receive in the course of the day a pint of milk, a simple nourishing lunch, and a sandwich before they are returned to their mothers, who fetch them about five o'clock. I was told that the most marked change in the children is to be observed during the first few weeks of their attendance at the school. For older children and for the adults, there are large open-air and covered playgrounds, individual gardens, social rooms, club rooms with refreshments, stage, workshops and other amenities, managed almost entirely by representatives of the tenants. This representative committee considers general problems connected with the estate, such as the prevention of noise and the preservation of trees, flowers, grass and other perishable amenities.

Well, here is a real brick-and-mortar achievement, in the midst of a typical "working-class" district of London. Why can't our Labour Councils learn from this reality and do likewise? And why is not Miss Denby on the advisory, or better still, on the controlling committee of the Housing Department of the Ministry of Health?

HARRY ROBERTS

Miscellany

AMATEUR OPERA

THE Cambridge University Musical Society is an enterprising institution and, like the Glasgow Opera Society, it has dared to attempt what neither the Covent Garden nor even the Glyndebourne managements have had the courage to tackle. The Glasgow production of *Les Troyens* a few years ago was the first and only one so far in this country, and the productions of *Béatrice et Bénédict* and of *Benvenuto Cellini* were the first in Great Britain of this century. Mozart's *Idomeneo* has also been produced at Glasgow although, unluckily, I did not see it. The opportunity, however, came again with the production at the Cambridge Arts Theatre with Camille Prior as producer and Boris Ord conducting.

Mozart was twenty-five years old in 1781 when he composed *Idomeneo* for the Munich opera house, but he had already written eight operas and other dramatic music, so that it would be quite incorrect to look upon *Idomeneo* as an early work by a composer as yet inexperienced in writing for the stage. Actually *Idomeneo* is one of his most ambitious and biggest works; indeed it is one of the largest and most elaborate scores he ever wrote, and his singspiel *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, composed a year later, is comparatively a much slighter and less important composition although it is much better known. This being so what is the reason for the neglect of *Idomeneo*? There are several reasons. One is the fact

that a principal role, Idamante, is written for a *castrato;* another reason is that it is what used to be called in the eighteenth century *opera seria*, that is to say a rather conventionalised type of Italian opera which went completely out of fashion before the end of that century.

But the chief reason for its neglect is the totally alien spirit of the nineteenth century. Greek tragedy and its insistence upon the over-ruling power of fate or destiny to which gods and men were equally subject was not only hardly intelligible to the popular intellectual leaders of the nineteenth century with their naive belief in progress and superficial scientific materialism, but was looked down upon as mere dead superstition or meaningless poetic ornament. There is no doubt that in some minds this was a natural reaction from the frigid classicism that abounded in the eighteenth century. It happened, however, that two musicians of genius, Gluck and Mozart, took their dramatic material from Greek tragedy and treated it seriously. The great operas of Gluck have suffered the same neglect as Mozart's *Idomeneo*, but this does not mean that they are dead. On the contrary, like *Idomeneo* they are only awaiting re-discovery by an age that will be more understanding and sympathetic than the last three generations.

How utterly lacking in comprehension of *Idomeneo* the recent age has been is demonstrated by the ridiculous attempts of certain musicians—Richard Strauss among them—to adapt or re-write *Idomeneo*. Richard Strauss is far too gifted a musician not to appreciate the musical virtuosity of Mozart's score, but no mere technical understanding of Mozart's genius can unlock the secret of such a work as *Idomeneo*. One has to look at it with the eyes of a Keats or a Hölderlin, both poets who were as instinctively sympathetic to the Greek genius as Gluck and Mozart were, and of whom, strangely enough, they may almost be reckoned as contemporaries. The first question to be asked of a production of *Idomeneo*, therefore, is how far it convinces one that those responsible for it have understood Mozart's work. I am afraid that in this respect the Cambridge production was a disappointment.

Perhaps it would be fair to say that the disappointment was due as much to imperfections on the musical as on the dramatic side. The orchestra was—to speak bluntly—hopelessly inadequate. One is very unpopular if one says this in Cambridge, where at the first sign of criticism people begin telling how wonderful it is that the members of the orchestra are almost entirely amateurs—as if this were not abundantly obvious. Cambridge has for many years now been much too easily satisfied with the musical efforts of its amateurs. One does not have to compare its productions with those of professional organisations to say this. It may surprise my Cambridge friends to hear that not only I but others who have had the opportunity of seeing the Glasgow amateur productions, for example, have found them far superior from every point of view to those of the Cambridge University Musical Society. It is an excellent thing for amateurs to have such opportunities to reveal their limitations to themselves, but it is not so good to find them so satisfied with their efforts. After all, Cambridge has thousands of undergraduates; also a Professor of Music; also a number of professional academic musicians. Should it even need the excuses that dramatic and musical critics so readily extend to the numerous London amateur societies whose members are engaged all day in business occupations?

I recently heard a performance of Gluck's *Orpheus* at Toynbee Hall, East London, which was wholly superior to this Cambridge production of *Idomeneo*, and I think that when a university musician of Mr. Boris Ord's eminence is responsible for a production of a practically unknown work by Mozart he must feel the responsibility towards Mozart and towards his audiences as one not lightly to be undertaken, and I am sure he must have hoped for better results than he obtained.

I should like to make clear that British musicians are at a great disadvantage in their isolated efforts at producing opera owing to the lack of opportunity for operatic training in this country. Apart from Sadler's Wells we have not a single regular opera house in Great Britain or the Dominions, and Sadler's Wells is still too recent and imperfect an institution to be of much use in this respect. Let this be remembered when I say that of all the principals in the Cambridge cast of *Idomeneo* the only one who possessed any style and authority was Irene Eisinger, and this in spite of the fact that she was neither in voice nor character ideally suited to the part of the Trojan Princess, Ilia! Miss Elizabeth Darbishire, who took the *castrato* role of Idamante, son of Idomeneo, has an exceptionally pretty voice and a charming presence, but she cannot yet stand, walk or act effectively upon the stage, and where is she to learn? Miss Elizabeth Abercombie did her best as Electra, but this is a part for a vocal Eleanore Duse or Sarah Bernhardt. Miss Abercombie has a good voice but she has not yet mastered the art of singing—not the art which such a part demands. One was only too conscious of the fact that she had not the vocal virtuosity to do justice to her truly excellent intentions. As Idomeneo Mr. Eric Starling must be given great credit for a vigorous and not altogether unsuccessful effort to get into the skin of the part. But how he overacts!

All these principals are professional singers of merit but they would have been far more capable and efficient artists if they had happened to have been born on the Continent rather than in Great Britain—as the case of Miss Eisinger demonstrates. In conclusion, I ought to say that the setting was not without merit and I wish I could say the same for the dances or the dancers. The audience, however, was enthusiastic and showered flowers upon the singers and a baby panda upon Mr. Ord in the spirit of a Cambridge rag. I do not think, however, that Mozart would have shared their enjoyment.

W. J. TURNER

EMIGRANTENSONG

ICH bin ein German refugee,
there is no fatherland for me
darum kam ich nach Surrey.
Ich habe still ein deutschen Pass,
and get my " permit " without fuss,
therefore darf ich nicht worry.

At first found ich so viel so queer,
the English cooking, und das Bier,
natürlich auch das Wetter.
But wenn ich Englisch speaking konnt,
wurd' ich of England very fond,
und like it immer better.

Bestimmt Life's difficult for us.
At home, you see, da war man 'was;
hier man is just a stranger.
Man sitzt in Lyons' Cornerhouse,
denn pickt the other Germans 'raus,
freut sich they're not in danger.

In Sommer, wenn die Stadt too hot
finde ich im Park a netten spot
for tuppence in a deck-chair.
Da liege ich im Sonnenschein
und gucke auf dem Serpentine
und dream that ich weit weg wär'.

Ich traüme of a Wunderland
where aliens are quite unbekannt
and also their restrictions.
Ich wand're in a peaceful Welt
wo Englische wird phonetisch spellt
Und love ist keine Fiction.

Doch on the whole bin ich content,
I'm happy, dass mich keiner kennt,
und fühl mich like a gipsy.
To-morrow ist's vielleicht vorbei—
what do I care, heut bin ich frei,
und Freiheit makes me tipsy!

THE DRAMATIC VALUE OF THE UNEXPRESSED

AT The Gate Theatre may be seen a short play which rivets the attention on a single subject which is never mentioned.

The Spring Time of Others is a small beautiful specimen of dramatic art. It is a melody of a few notes, played, if you like, on a penny-whistle; but in this case the instrument is silver, and the notes round and clear. It is the second play by M. Jean-Jacques Bernard that The Gate Theatre have performed. The first *L'Ame en Peine* I have not forgotten, which was a story based on the Platonic love-myth of the divided soul which is ever seeking in another the lost half of itself. In that play, too, the theme was never mentioned; and it was only by degrees that it dawned on the audience that the two chief characters behaved as they did, because, though they crossed each other's paths, they never recognised or found each other.

After the war there was a reaction against explicit rhetorical drama. Mr. John Palmer, the only English writer who took the trouble to keep us informed about French post-war drama quoted in his *Studies in the Contemporary Theatre* (Secker) this observation of M. Henri Bidou upon the plays of those years:

> En un mot, l'homme n'est pas seulement la parole qu'il dit. Les Compagnons de la Chimère rêvent un théâtre où l'on n'entendra pas seulement cette parole, mais où l'étoffe de la pièce serait tissée des sentiments muets comme des sentiments énoncés, où le dialogue se poursuivrait tantôt avec des mots et tantôt sans paroles.

M. Jean-Jacques Bernard was not then an isolated apparition, but it was he who perhaps managed this kind of play best. His more recent plays, *Jeanne de Pantin* and *A la Recherche des Coeurs* hardly come under the description of the formula, "The Theatre of Silence," but *The Spring Time of Others* does.

The theme is a mother's unconscious jealousy of her much loved daughter; a jealousy which neither the girl nor her husband recognise as being what it is until the end of the play, but which determines the mother's behaviour towards them. The treatment of this theme is decidedly pre-Freudian. Advance the date of events a few years, and the young people would have instantly spotted the explanation of Clarisse's behaviour, and even Clarisse herself might have been more aware of her motives. But the influence of this hidden jealousy on her actions and feelings is so truthfully and delicately shown that it is enthralling to watch, and the perplexity of Maurice and Gilberte prompts even now no impatience. In *The Spring Time of Others* everything, or nearly everything, depends upon the skill with which the part of Clarisse is played, and Miss Veronica Turleigh plays it almost perfectly. You can guess her thoughts and feelings from moment to moment, and yet she never over acts. Her intonations and gestures are right. There are only two moments when Miss Turleigh cannot get the theme of the play across, intact and by herself. These both occur in the last act: the long silent stare which mother and daughter exchange, and their final embrace on which the curtain falls. Here Clarisse is dependent on the acting of the actress who plays the part of her disabused daughter; she cannot produce the right effect alone. Miss Peggy Bryan acted Gilberte touchingly and prettily, but in Gilberte's shyness when she first confesses to her mother her love for Maurice, and in her distress when she thinks her marriage is going to pieces, there is nothing very hard to act. What is difficult, and very difficult, for an actress to suggest without speaking is the shock of Gilberte's discovery that her sympathetic mother *wants* her marriage to come irretrievably to grief, and again to convey in embracing her the kind of love that still survives between them. For something does survive even the terrible challenge and admission that passed between them in that long stare. If Clarisse's unconscious jealousy had succeeded in separating Gilberte and Maurice, then not only would Gilberte have come to hate her, but Clarisse would herself have ceased (so I read human nature) to love Gilberte. Happily she failed. When, as Gilberte is leaving the room with her husband, Clarisse calls her back (for to Clarisse, bereft and shamed, this is a final parting), it seems to me, on looking back, that there ought to have been two movements on Gilberte's part: first a step or two suggesting cold acquiescence ("All right, if you *still* want me to kiss you I suppose I must"); then, when she sees the look of frozen misery on her mother's face, a rush of tenderness (all childhood suddenly remembered), ending in a hug. But, and this seems to me important, Clarisse should not return the vehemence of that embrace; even if that hug had meant forgiveness she could not accept it. As Gilberte releases her, Clarisse should kiss her almost impersonally, as though she were asserting by that kiss that in spite of the undertow of the obscure feelings that had made the sight of young love intolerable to her (especially with Maurice who at first she thought loved *her*) her heart will always wish Gilberte to be happy. Only in some such way as this can the last tableau sum up the complex emotions of this fine little play.

DESMOND MACCARTHY

THE MOVIES

WE movie-goers have been having a thin time. The established successes, whether American or British, run on and on; and none of the recent French imports (except *La Bête Humaine*) has amounted to much. *La Femme du Boulanger* is coming to the Berkeley; this is the Provençal farce, starring Raimu, about which I wrote when it was shown by the Film Society; I gather that many people liked it, but I found it endlessly repetitive and loquacious. On Monday the London Pavilion present an English dubbed version of *Double Crime sur la Ligne Maginot*, a film with more documentary than narrative interest which had a run at the Academy a few months back. Three really interesting Russian productions have yet to reach a public screen: they are the charming children's film *Lone White Sail*, *Alexander Nevski* and *Professor Mamlock*. The last has been inexplicably banned: since we are asked to defend ourselves against a regime of tyranny and brutality, we might at least be allowed to see that regime as it is, and *Professor Mamlock* shows us this, with dignity and without hysteria. Every progressive society in the country, whether political or cultural, should agitate for the removal of this ban.

American offerings (to borrow Hollywood's favourite word) hardly relieve the gloom. At the Plaza Mr. de Mille and his usual Cast of Thousands have dumped a 135-minute epic of the Far West called *Union Pacific*. At the New Gallery Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers undertake a little historical research into the career of their famous predecessors *Vernon and Irene Castle*: pre-war fashions and dance crazes provide some fun and sentiment of the B.B.C. "Scrapbook" order, and it is nice to hear the old cocky, uninhibited tunes. (Scientific query: why has the voice of the female entertainer dropped an octave in twenty years?) At the moment of writing the Empire is showing a sentimental glorification of the New York Police Force with Wallace Beery as dear old *Sergeant Madden* (wouldn't hurt a fly and on capital terms with the crooks) and Alan Curtis as his ambitious son; this film is supported by the very English (and at moments very funny) antics of Will Hay in *Ask a Policeman*, and by Friday will have been replaced by *The Ice Follies of* 1939! Not much to get hold of, is there? The exception is *Dark Victory*, at the Warner, which bravely attacks the unpopular theme of a girl sentenced to die within ten months of a tumour on the brain. Movies being what they are, the most extraordinary virtue of this film is that she actually does die; and a very considerable virtue is the playing of Miss Bette Davis, whose talent for suggesting nervous instability of temperament is unequalled and who proves completely adequate to all the climaxes of the narrative. Unfortunately the quality of the dialogue, and indeed the whole conception and psychology of the film, are so inferior to her performance that one leaves

the cinema with feelings of exasperation at the waste of such talent. George Brent gives a commonplace performance as the doctor who marries her, and Geraldine Fitzgerald makes a distinguished Horatio to Miss Davis' Hamlet.

Consolation was to be had at a show of three new G.P.O. documentaries destined for the New York Fair. Not much of the real England finds its way into our feature pictures, and I am glad to think that America (whose own films seldom lack a convincing background) will have this opportunity to learn something true about English life. The facts are not varnished over: *Spare Time*, for instance, makes no pretence that the worker's leisure is all night classes and silver bands, but gallantly includes pools, all-in wrestling and mere loafing. All three pictures (for whose production Cavalcanti is responsible) are full of delightfully photographed detail: the comic gravity of a euphonium-player, the slow smile of a mother feeding her baby. The best is *Health for the Nation*, which has the advantage of a commentary well written by Hugh Gray and beautifully spoken by Ralph Richardson. The importance of the commentary cannot easily be exaggerated: in spite of its dramatic theme, *Men in Danger* often becomes dull owing to the listless, over-polite delivery of the speaker. I am sure New Yorkers will find it namby-pamby, used as they are to the more athletic style of the speaker in *The River* or the genial bark of Mr. Raymond Gram Swing. A documentary which aims at success outside as well as inside the British Isles must find English commentators whose voices have vigour and variety: Ralph Richardson, evidently, is one; Laurence Olivier would be admirable; and it would be worth trying Alec Clunes. The chatty microphone style doesn't suit this medium at all.

PETER GALWAY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Holborn Empire

There are still two days in which to enjoy the art of that master of comedy, Mr. Billy Bennett. He appears on the programme last but one. And it is a tribute to the other turns to say that one can sit them out without becoming frantically impatient. Maurice Colleano particularly is an excellent knockabout acrobat with a winning grin. Ted Ray is a fresh comedian, of the whisper-into-the-microphone sort. Billy Cotton's band occupies the stage for a quarter of an hour and will delight those who can stand a day of judgment in brass. And then comes Mr. Bennett, washing his hands, creasing his eyes, with a buttonhole and a hank of hair plastered over a greasy forehead. He has new songs: even a revised visit to the seaside improving at points on the old. He gives from time to time a "little recitation"; he ends up "that's all of that one." A parody of Dangerous Dan MacGrew and the lady known as Lu found him at the top of his form. He is a master of melodramatic recitation: his turns conjure up black moustaches, revolvers, creaking doorways. He is only an occasional visitor to the London stage. Don't miss him.

Six-day Cycling at Wembley

Round and round, like music, they go. At first sight, with all colours and numbers mixed, with new arrivals joining in and old ones dropping out, it makes a spectacle almost as baffling as a page of Joyce. But then the programme helps us to disentangle names and positions. Van Kempen, familiar from other meets, nearly always had the lead; the most points have been picked up by two newcomers, Van Vliet and Wals. Buysse, as usual, is indefatigable and one might tip him already as the winner. The phases of this marathon cycling vary, of course; some afternoons may be comparatively dull, it depends whether there is a "jam" or struggle to gain laps. So far six laps cover all the entrants except two. No doubt, with casualties and flagging muscles, the line of cyclists will string out. There are still two days in which to observe their strange antics. Saturday night sees the finish and it should be admirable entertainment to take the bus to Wembley and dine while the velocepedists jazz by. All cycling England will be there in shorts, and though no English competitor even gets near the front of these monster races, the cycles, the tyres, and no doubt the air blown into them will be guaranteed home made.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, June 3rd—
- A Series of Mock Tribunals. Speakers include: A. Fenner Brockway, Rev. Douglas Prichard and J. Allen Skinner; Caxton Hall, 7.30.
- Discussion: "Should Socialists Oppose Conscription?" National Trade Union Club, 7.30.
- Philharmonic Choir, Queen's Hall, 8.
- "Six Characters in Search of an Author," Cambridge University A.D.C. Till June 12th.
- "Much Ado About Nothing," Regent's Park.

SUNDAY, June 4th—
- W. B. Curry: "Economic Aspects of the Refugee Problem," Conway Hall, 11.
- Sir S. Radhakrishnan: "Gandhi," Conway Hall, 3.

MONDAY, June 5th—
- Handel's "Rodelinda," Old Vic.

TUESDAY, June 6th—
- E. K. Waterhouse: "Eighteenth-century British Painting and the Thought of the Encyclopædists," Warburg Inst., 5.30. And on June 13th and 20th.
- International Peace Meeting. Speakers: Mme. Tabouis, Dr. Edith Summerskill, Miss Ellen Wilkinson and Mrs. Charlotte Haldane; Friends House, 7.45.
- Mrs. Amber Blanco White: "How to make Converts," Winifred Swan Studio, 10 Henrietta Street, W.1, 8.
- May Week Revue, Arts Theatre, Cambridge.
- "Cupid and Commonsense," Torch.
- "Das Rheingold," June 6th; "Die Walküre," June 9th; "Siegfried," June 12th; "Götterdämmerung," June 14th; Covent Garden.

WEDNESDAY, June 7th—
- Fine Art Society Watercolour Exhibition. Till June 24th.
- Kurt Jooss will give an informal talk on the principles of his work, Dance Centre, Apollo Place, Chelsea, 5.

THURSDAY, June 8th—
- Rochester Cathedral Festival. Till June 10th.

Correspondence

FEDERALISM OF THE LEAGUE

SIR,—Between 1914 and 1918 men and women who demanded an explicit statement of the war aims of the Allied Governments were objects of public obloquy. In this country some of them suffered imprisonment for casting doubt on the claim that the last war (like the next war) was a war to end war or (as also like the next war) a war to safeguard democracy. When it was over, we hanged the Kaiser by our suffrages, and the Versailles settlement of the joint imperialistic claims of Britain and France removed any doubts about what the Allied Governments had asked the conscripts of my generation to fight for.

Both in Britain and in France during the months which have elapsed since Munich, the Left Parties have met the request for an explicit statement of the aims for which Britain and France are arming to the teeth by arguments which are all too familiar to those who knew at the time what the last war was really fought for. They have become more deeply committed to a course which entails active support for the avowedly imperialistic aims of Daladier or Churchill; and the results of British by-elections justify the suspicion that the average voter who sincerely wants peace has no confidence in the Left either as an instrument for assuring it or as an instrument for carrying out the traditional policy of a party whose leaders are recruited from the officer caste.

There is now a growing feeling that the immediate danger of war has diminished. In these circumstances is it too much to ask whether the Labour Party or the advocates of a Popular Front have any long-range policy of constructive pacification, and if so, what is it? From their official utterances it seems that they pledge support to the League of Nations without regard (a) to those inherent strategical weaknesses which have now become obvious to the man in the street, or (b) to the fact that the *status quo*, as guaranteed by the League, has its roots in a blatantly imperialistic settlement with precisely those results which the Left Parties prophesied during the lucid interval between 1918 and 1932. Though we sometimes hear half-hearted suggestions for the reform of the League amid the thunderings on the left, and more rarely (as in speeches by Mr. Noel Baker), concrete suggestions for revising the *status quo*, there has been no explicit official attempt to enlighten the electorate about how the war aims of a Churchill-

Eden Cabinet would differ from the aims of a Government led by Attlee and (or) Sinclair.

We have already seen the results of trying to maintain the peace of Europe by a military alliance between Britain, France and Russia, and we have already seen what results follow when the demand for an explicit statement of war aims is met by the excuse that Germany is the aggressor nation. So we have been warned. Like many average fathers who have not forgotten what it meant for young men to be in Flanders or in prison during the last war-to-end-war, I vainly seek any lucid indications of their non-military intentions in the manifestos of the Labour Party, the Liberals or (the later) Sir Stafford Cripps, and am anxious to know *here and now* whether they stand for one or other of the following alternatives :

(a) The rehabilitation of a League of Nations based on the imperialistic claims of France and Britain, and on the preservation of national sovereignty in matters concerned with national defence ;

(b) A Federation of European States which are prepared (i) to relinquish national sovereignty in matters pertaining to defence, to aviation and to the exploitation of backward peoples ; (ii) to repudiate the racialist principle which underlies native administration in Rhodesia and in South Africa ; (iii) to reorganise colonial administration on a basis of Federal Trusteeship with the explicit aim of making the advantages and privileges of western civilisation available to the subject peoples of Africa.

Aberdeen. LANCELOT HOGBEN

DEMOCRACY WITHIN THE LABOUR PARTY

SIR,—I witnessed to-day at the Southport Conference a further remarkable example of the working of democracy within the Labour Party.

A resolution requesting the National Executive Committee to promote the development of regional associations of constituency Labour parties, in order to strengthen the Party's political work, was proposed by the West Bristol divisional party.

The resolution was opposed by the National Executive Committee on the ground that the Executive prefers regional councils consisting of representatives of Trade Unions and Co-operative Societies as well as constituency parties rather than councils containing representatives of constituency parties only. It need hardly be pointed out that constituency parties already contain members both of Trade Unions and Co-operative Societies.

When the vote was put an overwhelming show of hands went up in favour of the resolution, the constituency parties' delegates voting for it practically unanimously. But a card vote being demanded the resolution was declared lost by 860,000 to 1,131,000 as a result of the Trade Union " block " votes.

One feels bound to ask whether the National Executive Committee will now consider itself mandated by a conference decision to inflict on the constituency parties a form of regional organisation which none of them want, and to take disciplinary action against anyone who attempts to promote the kind of regional organisation which constituency parties almost universally desire.

DEMOCRAT

THE UNEMPLOYED

SIR,—The *Manchester Guardian* is generally considered to be one of the fairest and most reasonable of all daily National newspapers, and that being so, it is interesting to read in their " editorial " on May 25th, 1939, that " no one who reads the report carefully can fail to see how grossly the Government has failed in its duty to the unemployed." The report they refer to is the report of the Unemployed Assistance Board, which in addition they refer to as " a disquieting document."

In spite of the growing demand for labour in connection with civil defence, ignoring for the present whether such work is right or wrong, the Government is doing little to meet the demand. Out of a possible 135,000 eligible unemployed last year, only 23,000 men went through instructional centres, but what is much worse, of these 23,000 only 5,760 obtained work within six months of finishing their course.

The only way that such centres can be really useful is that the men at the end of their training should have jobs to go to, and not only jobs, *but work at Trade Union rates of pay.*

I think it is utterly wrong to go on blaming Mr. Ernest Brown for all the trouble, but as he is the figurehead, he is there to be fired at, but I would rather say " because of " Ernest Brown or alternatively, " because of " the Government's policy both foreign and internal over the past four years, instead of " in spite of " him, unemployables are bred and nothing is being done about them, or to my mind what is more important, nothing is being done " for them." Of the Unemployment Assistance Board's 600,000 clients, the majority are for the most part long standing unemployed. Almost 50 per cent. are over 45 years of age and as the *Guardian* points out, the dole for many of them is a pension, and their chances of employment are faint.

Another serious aspect of the problem is that there are 100,000 men under 30 years of age, 50 per cent. of whom have had little or no work in the last three years. Nearly 10 per cent. suffer from mental or physical defects and in addition, large numbers are in need of medical and/or optical treatment. The physical condition of the unemployed is undoubtedly terrible, and disgracefully low. Of the 100,000 however, the majority are, the *Manchester Guardian* says, " fairly fit." Why do they remain unemployed ?

The largest group are men without skill—victims of " blind alley " employment. Such men would probably be willing to go to a training centre for a period if they were certain of employment afterwards, the *Manchester Guardian* asserts ; but I also add that that is true and fair only if they receive Trade Union rates of pay. I think that is most important, and I find fault with the *Manchester Guardian* for not mentioning it. There is apparently a small number of men who are labelled " work shy." The number must be very small if they exist at all, but if camps are being introduced for the compulsory attendance and training of such a minority, I do strongly feel that the large mass of unemployed who only ask for work and a place in the sun, however small, in other words " A Square Deal," shall not be exploited and compelled to go to training centres, and in addition, that they shall not even be asked to go to training centres unless there is a reasonable certainty of their receiving that " fairly paid " work mentioned earlier. Training Centres or Camps will not cure the unemployment problem. There may be a few " work shy " unemployed, but it would seem that there are some " justice shy " Cabinet Ministers and people in authority, who believe that the only way to solve the problem is by such measures as labour camps and conscription.

The National Association Against Unemployment will hold its

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inaugural meeting on June 13th at 7.15 p.m. at Kingsway Hall, London, W.C.2, and amongst the speakers will be, Dr. Donald Soper, Rt. Hon. George Lansbury, M.P., Rev. Reginald Sorensen, M.P., Mr. Howard Marshall, Dr. C. E. M. Joad, Rev. Alex Miller, Father St. John B. Groser, Rev. William Dick, Rev. Leslie Artingstall, Miss Mary Hughes, Rev. Malcolm Spencer, and other prominent people who are not only sponsors of the Association but keen to see that something is done about the problem of unemployment which is both just and humane.

The Poplar and Stepney Association Against Unemployment, Trinity Hall, Augusta Street, Poplar, E.14.

WILLIAM G. MILLMAN, Acting Secretary, National Association Against Unemployment

THE PROBLEM OF COAL

SIR,—Perhaps your readers are interested in the conditions in which their coal is mined. They pay from 45*s.* to 55*s.* per ton for household coal; of this the man who digs it from the coal-face receives about 1*s.* 9*d.* The hours of actual work are 7½ for those fortunate enough to get it.

Coalmining is an extremely unpleasant and exceedingly dangerous occupation; yet for those who live in the mining areas there is no alternative. They are entirely at the disposal of the mineowners and the controllers of heavy industry. If, as recently happened, the controllers of a steel works decide to move their factory to the sea and use imported coal, the miners who had been working in the mines that supplied the works with coal are almost irrevocably thrown on the dole overnight, with little prospect of getting off it again.

This means that though there is coal in the ground, though the country could use the coal, though there are thousands of men willing to work the coal, the community at large must tax itself to keep in idleness these people so that the owners of the steel works may increase their profits. Similarly, the men work 7½ hours a day for a wage so low that if they have to go a seven-penny bus ride to work, it is more satisfactory to remain on the dole, in order that the coal-owners may ship their coal abroad at sixpence per ton and recoup themselves by charging your readers 55*s.*

We have a national emergency; yet in that area of Britain in which the world's best coal is mined we have almost total unemployment. And all that has been offered these men in exchange is a supposed telephone factory in which some 400 of their children are employed in the making of bombs till the age of 18. At that time they will be put out of work, to be kept on the dole at the public expense, because the bomb-making firm finds itself unable to pay them a wage that would be tolerable for a grown person. Of the children about to leave school in this same area 274 out of 305 have free milk in the mornings because they are undernourished by parents who cannot afford to feed them satisfactorily on the dole.

The mines are there, the coal and the labour are there; the country needs the coal. So far all that has been done is the passing of the Coal Mines Reorganisation Act, which enables colliery groups to keep up the price of coal by closing "redundant" mines.

J. A. KAY

Pembroke College,
Oxford.

A.R.P.

SIR,—The strange case of Lord Hailey will be repeated all too often as long as A.R.P. is directed by politicians, and as long as the scientific advisers are denied their share in initiating A.R.P. policy.

I came across another very odd feature of A.R.P. this week. Three weeks ago it may be remembered that the Press carried reports of experiments in which goats sheltered from high explosive in Anderson shelters were claimed to be quite unhurt. These physiological experiments were carried out under the direction of Sir Joseph Barcroft. Yet only this week, Dr. Stradling, chief scientific adviser to the Home Office, told an audience of scientists (an open meeting of the Association of Scientific Workers) that he had not yet received the report on these experiments. One is forced to the conclusion that either these reports were released in a great hurry so that the Press might revive the flagging hopes of its readers in the Government shelters, or that there is a serious lack of co-ordination at the Home Office. It is to be hoped that the story about the goats is not another ray of synthetic sunshine from Downing Street. The genius of this Government in raising false hopes and false fears has the unfortunate effect of discrediting in advance all such experiments, which, honestly carried out and honestly publicised, might do much to restore public confidence.

WILLIAM E. DICK

Science News Service,
91a Pimlico Road, S.W.1.

MR. GEDYE AND THE "DAILY TELEGRAPH"

SIR,—I have read Mr. Gedye's rejoinder to the letter of the Managing Editor of the *Daily Telegraph* on the subject of Mr. Gedye's resignation from the staff of that journal.

I am not competent to discuss the details of what passed between Mr. Gedye and the Higher Command of the *Daily Telegraph*; but I am very well conversant with the line of policy in foreign affairs which has been followed by that journal; and in common fairness I should like to point out that Mr. Gedye's vindication is founded upon a quite erroneous assumption.

He represents the policy of the *Daily Telegraph* as being one of support for Mr. Chamberlain in the crisis of Munich. That is unjust. As every regular reader of the *Daily Telegraph* must know, its attitude all through that anxious time was extremely critical of Mr. Chamberlain's measures and methods, though its criticism was expressed in terms more measured than those adopted by Mr. Gedye in his book, 'Fallen Bastions"

ROBERT HIELD

Boundary Lodge,
Slade Oak Lane, Gerrards Cross.

EUROPEAN JUNGLE

SIR,—The reviewer of *European Jungle* in your last issue quotes me as saying that Herr Hitler "likes those around him to enjoy themselves with music and song and wine." He continues: "The truth is, of course, that Hitler abhors tobacco, and is doing his utmost to introduce prohibition."

If Mr. Howard knew that wine and beer are served regularly to all Herr Hitler's guests, and if he had ever seen the Rhineland or Bavaria during carnival time he would hardly have made the latter statement, which is, however, typical of his pathological hatred of everything about the German Führer. I do not complain

S——W

THE WOMAN WHO WAS POOR:

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"Masterpiece . . . the startling thing about this book is its nobility. His mysticism is gigantic . . . Bloy's rhetoric as it wields the situations is tremendous . . . unlike any other novel in the world."

G. W. STONIER in the *New Statesman*

Sheed and Ward, 31, Paternoster Row, E.C.4.

about his criticisms of my work, although they seem to me rather personal, but I do think he should be better informed about foreign affairs.

For instance about that " extraordinary thing called the Grand Orient " : if your reviewer knows anything at all about France he should know of the great political influence of Masonry in that country and of the great opposition to the Grand Orient, not only amongst Roman Catholics, but nowadays amongst people of all classes, who are beginning to see it as a tool of Communism and International Jewry. Really, the Grand Orient is not my private bogy ; if your reviewer has never heard of it he ought not to be given books on Europe to review. F. YEATS-BROWN

14 Queen's Gate, S.W.7.

JAMES JOYCE

SIR,—I feel that I must write a word of thanks to Mr. Stonier for his illuminating article on *Finnegan's Wake*. For many years it has been to me a ground of keen mortification that owing to the Government's solicitude for my morals I have never been able to read a page of a writer whose qualities have been a foremost subject of discussion in British literary journals. Now, thanks to Mr. Stonier's generous quotations, this burden is for ever lifted. Mr. Stonier has illustrated Mr. Joyce's " humour," his " lyrical gift," his " miraculously compressed " language, and so on, and I feel that from now on I know all about Mr. Joyce that I need to know. I even know from whom he derives. The inane sentence " Shem is as short for Shemus as Jem is joky for Jacob " is exactly M. P. Shiel at his worst. In Shiel a very considerable natural gift became the victim of a perverse theory. Whether in Joyce an even greater perversity has nullified an equal natural gift I shall be content never to know. J. W. HARTLEY

Vallona, London Road,
Prestbury, Ches.

SIR,—May I suggest you publish a review of *Finnegan's Wake* every quarter ? If the work proves to be a masterpiece, the progressive revelation in your pages will be for posterity the best account of how we reached appreciation. If, on the other hand, it is agreed to be a " colossal aberration " the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will have added yet one more item to its " Fasti " of exposures. J. H. EGGLESHAW

23 Southgate, Wakefield.

ARACHNOPHOBIA

SIR,—Y. Y. so often asks a provocative question at the end of his delightful articles. Does he expect an answer or is it merely to stimulate thought ? The latter, I think, and although I know that one must take him with a grain of salt, he has opened up a subject that has its very serious side.

He asks, " Is it possible that the fear of spiders is as ineradicable an instinct as the less common fear of cats ? Or do psycho-analysts know the cause of it and can they cure it ? "

The fear in this case is only a particular manifestation of the primitive instinct and as such is of course ineradicable. But by asking if it can be cured, Y. Y. is presuming that in this particular manifestation, the instinct has assumed abnormal proportions, has got out of control, and is therefore quite rightly considering it as a symptom of neurosis. I think any skilled psycho-therapist would affirm that this abnormal manifestation of fear could be cured, given the will to be cured, a very important condition.

Unfortunately there is still the usual, quite understandable, lack of knowledge and slowness to make use of new methods amongst the medical profession and consequently, even if the ordinary G.P. recognises a neurotic symptom, he will continue with his old treatment, or if he should call in a specialist it will in all probability not be the psycho-therapist.

As one who has seen some of the splendid results achieved by psycho-therapic treatment, I feel called upon to give my testimony whenever possible, and that, Sir, is my apology for this letter.

Northwick Lodge, ROSEMARY CARLILE
Harrow on the Hill.

FRANK RYAN

SIR,—Following on the recent formation in Ireland of a Committee to petition for the release of Frank Ryan from his 30 years' sentence of imprisonment by the Franco Government, Irishmen in London, under the auspices of the James Connolly Club, have set up a similar Committee.

Our patrons include such well-known names as Dr. Hewlett Johnson, D. N. Pritt, K.C., John Parker, M.P., Sean O'Casey, H. N. Brailsford, Mairin Mitchell, A. L. Morton, Dudley Collard, Tom Mann, Fred Copeman, Desmond Ryan and others.

Believing in the urgent need for the immediate release of this great fighter for democracy, who, owing to the rigours of his imprisonment, is now lying seriously ill in prison hospital, and calling upon enlightened and progressive opinion throughout England and the world, we ask that letters of protest and resolutions demanding Frank Ryan's release be sent to the Foreign Office, to the Duke of Alba, and the High Commissioner for Eire in London, Mr. Dulanty.

On our part, we shall not rest until the aim of our Committee is reached. We should be grateful for any donations to help us in this campaign. C. E. MILNE,

Connolly Club, Secretary,
46 Lonsdale Square, N.1. Frank Ryan Release Committee

WHAT PRICE ?

SIR,—A friend of mine has just accepted the position of first sales in a gown shop and, included in the terms offered her, is an extra 6*d*. in the pound for any money she takes over and above the sales price of the article.

She informed me, when I expressed surprise, that this was " the usual thing in the gown business," and, if that is so, I think that it should be brought to public notice. JOHN MYERS

60 Lichfield Street, Walsall.

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS

SIR,—I don't think Mr. Joad's pessimism about the Access to Mountains Bill is unjustified. As the " access " land can be closed by the Minister upon application by the owner or occupier, where danger from fire exists, and as it is unlawful to disturb or interfere with any animal, bird or fish thereon, one can safely forecast that these will prove good reasons for severely restricting the wandering feet of the rambler over a good part of the year.

It is also to be noted that there is no obligation on the owner or occupier to provide protection against dangerous places on his land.

" Katoomba," 16 Frith Road, Hove, 4. JOHN BLAKE

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by DR FREDERIC LOOMIS

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¶ Two impressions in one week. 8*s*. 6*d*.

Consulting Room

DENT

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE Golden Rule: Reviewers always know more than the authors of the books they review. This is a curious fact, but until grasped, the tyro will find himself hopelessly lost. Who are you? Jones? No; but Yeats plus, Claudel plus, Rochefoucauld plus. Don't forget it. In a better world, no doubt, reviewers would be expected to write books, and authors, with a becoming modesty, would review them. But till then, parasites and horse-flies, you have the upper hand; use it.

Refer familiarly to well-known writers in circles where they are not known. Say of some distinguished person you have never seen: "I met him once"; if you have shaken hands with him say: "I know him well."

You must make a spectrum of critical terms, shaded from "abominable," through "delicate and restrained," to "epical." "Unpleasant" is your worst indigo; "delightful" spreads a delightfully pink haze.

When you happen to know the author whose book you are reviewing, you can describe his writing in terms of his personal appearance: his "lean, athletic prose," or "shuffling narrative," "gap-toothed metaphors," "dimpled laughter" (keep this for children's books). Ignorant readers will mistake you for a good writer.

Remember, the style of your review depends on the sort of book you are reviewing. *Belles lettres* should be welcomed with a gurgle of "forsooths," "indeeds," "as our author has it," "what more can one wish?" and so on. Never damn *belles lettres*: it isn't done. Fiction may be treated cynically or sentimentally; the story must be given in as few words as possible. "The girl who has left the man with whom . . ." In describing the characters your choice of adjectives (lush or ironical) will depend on whether you like the story or not. A first book by a novelist is "promising," a second "disappointing"; then you move on to someone else.

On the rare occasions when you cannot avoid reviewing a book of verse, quote only to damn (praise gives you away), and to show how verse should be written quote Mallarmé (of course, in French).

Critical essays, biographies, books of travel or reminiscence need special treatment; the only general rule being to steal as much as possible from the book without acknowledging it.

Engage in controversy. Remember that the reviewer is always given the last say.

Utilise misprints. "Miss Bowen provides a cutlet for the emotions" would be a good opening sentence for any review. "Pubic appreciation" enables you to attach an unpleasant label to a novelist you dislike. Mispell names. Call Professor Wilson, "Mr. Bilson"; describe Mr. D. S. Savage as Miss Savage as frequently as possible.

Crib from the blurb and then sneer at it. Suggest that the author, who is described on the flap as a "fragrant stylist," writes his own blurbs.

Write about funny books as though they were serious. It will impress readers if you say that Mr. Wodehouse is an escapist and ignores the social implications of his characters. Serious works, on the other hand, should be treated flippantly; this again, to impress the reader. "For light reading in the orchard"—thus you may begin—"there could be no better book than Miss Smedley's *Unemployment and the Trade Cycle*; her caustic wit keeps us constantly a-titter."

Some books are "timely," others "for eternity." Others "fill gaps." Others "shout to be read." Others are "unreadable" (these are the novels with a circulation of 1,000,000). Your job is to learn to distinguish these different kinds of books.

Where and when books should be read. There is the book that keeps you out of bed; the book that keeps you awake all night; the book that gets you divorced from your wife; the book, finally, which you read at street crossings and which gets you run over. The last, needless to say, should be rare.

Complain of long books that they are "padded" and of short ones that they are "slapdash."

Translations are always competent. There is always a misprint on page 215.

Indulge, like Cabinet Ministers, in reminiscences. "When I was a little boy . . ." Pretend that you read Hardy when you were six, Flaubert at your prep. school, and that by the age of fifteen you gave up reading altogether.

Aim at being off-hand—"a bright little tale of matricide and incest."

When reviewing Mr. Eliot refer to his "unfortunate levity."

Write your reviews on pink paper with lavender-coloured ink. This distresses the printer and increases his vigilance.

In your first and last paragraphs you will find yourself airing your views on life. If the editor heartlessly cuts these as having nothing to do with the book, you should preserve them sedulously. Afterwards, when the reviews have been published and forgotten, collect these beginnings and ends and make them into a book. It is much the easiest road to authorship.

Do not hesitate to plagiarise your own writings. What you have written six months ago is forgotten; revive it. Every time X writes a novel you can serve up the same old dingy praise, varying it (for the sake of fairness) with occasional abuse.

Praise the dead, the far-distant, the non-existent.

Make your platitudes resound by attaching a name to them. "Women are trouble makers in any family," as Tolstoy said.

Learn the Bennett technique of reviewing. This is to collect together any number of statements in the same magnetic field and fire them off at the reader. Thus: "Women's first novels are usually amazingly good. A first novel is difficult to write and should be brief, smutty, libellous and autobiographical. This is a second novel by a young man. Young men do not write good second novels. Second novels should be . . ."

Or the Desmond MacCarthy way: "I do not usually review a novel until it has been out six months. When everyone has had their say and I have been able to shut my ears to them at dinner parties, then, if there is still a word or two floating round about the novel, I presume it to be good. I do not read many novels; I like a cosy tale before going to sleep; otherwise I am easily—some might say too easily—pleased." But publishers don't much like this reminiscent sort of review.

Or the Connolly way: "Well, chaps, and chips, have us all got our homework done? You, Aggerton, don't you find Maupassant smelly? Priestpole, who wrote *Oblomov* and why? Don't quibble. Galsgoggle, what did Milton mean when he wrote 'blind mouths'? You don't know your public, etc., etc." You may not do it as well as he does; but that won't matter.

Or, finally, the Tom Harrisson way: "Poet Spender says he thinks continually of those who were great. What footling froth! Mass-Observer X 101 says the percentage of people in Bolton who think always of those who were great is 2.7. Should a poet speak for the common man? Not so, poet Spender, etc." This is not very popular with editors, and besides is rather badly paid.

Get on to the committee of a Book Club. Give book club lunches, picnics in the New Forest, breakfasts if you like.

Write introductions, causeries, obituaries. Edit anthologies. Advise publishers. Be careful not to write books yourself.

Nothing succeeds like success—as the reviewer said who had never read a book in his life.

When you are middle-aged, see that newspapers publish photographs of you at twenty-five and refer to you as the "well-known" or "distinguished" critic. Wear unseasonable ties. Leave, occasionally, a bootlace undone when you go to Lady So-and-so's. Never give in to books you really like; keep your best praise for those that are never read; and you will make a reputation.

G. W. STONIER

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Like Dr. Bradley's "Parade of the Living," this book aims at presenting the problem of mankind from the standpoint of evolution. "Mr. Bradley writes on a great theme with a refreshing command of phrase . . . a book which contains interest and stimulation for every thinking reader."—*Manchester Guardian* 7s. 6d. net.

ROUTLEDGE KEGAN PAUL

MONOPOLY COBDENISM

The Struggle for Peace. By NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, P.C., M.P. *Hutchinson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

This volume will become one of the curiosities of English history. It contains the chief speeches made by Mr. Chamberlain on foreign affairs, from the day he became Premier in May, 1937, until the 3rd of April, 1939, when he announced his decision to set about rebuilding collective security. The speeches are linked by brief explanatory notes from the pen of Mr. Arthur Bryant, of which I shall have more to say later on. The first impression one receives is of the tremendous vitality of Mr. Chamberlain. Succeeding a shrewd but lethargic statesman, who had been content to let things slip the way they were going, and to keep on good terms with public opinion even when he knew that public opinion was wrong, Mr. Chamberlain immediately decided to stop this disastrous procedure. With a simplicity of vision impossible to a more experienced leader he threw himself into the job of deliberately pushing things as fast as possible down the slope, and giving to the nation the peace and appeasement which it desired, upon any terms. If in so doing he must flout his foreign office advisers, there was always Sir Horace Wilson to offer the fruits of his expert inexperience: if every Tory M.P. with an understanding of European policy or imperial interests watched his diplomacy with apprehension or positive hostility, he could sack Mr. Eden and Mr. Duff Cooper and invite Lord Halifax to treat Hitler as an Austrian Gandhi. Throughout Mr. Chamberlain was the dominant personality, negotiating with the dictators, in the words of the *Times*, "as with his compeers." If ever a man took complete personal responsibility for the success of a policy, it was he.

And how simple it seemed! I have no doubt after reading *The Struggle for Peace* of Mr. Chamberlain's complete sincerity. He knew that he, unburdened by the prejudices of diplomats and experts, had found the solution of the problem. Standing far above party-politics, with its endless feud between the imperialists and the fanatics of Collective Security, he felt that he viewed Europe with the cool and humane common-sense of a business-man. He saw a League of Nations, tied to the defence of French interests and of the small nations created by the Treaty of Versailles, a League moreover into which Communist Russia had intrigued its way. And on the other side he saw two nations, both thoroughly ordered and disciplined, which had suffered a raw deal. How obvious it was that British interests lay in encouraging Russia to lose interest in the West and become an Asiatic nation, and creating a concert of the great European Powers. Cursing those ideologues who preferred the principles of the League to peace, and the vested interests of a Balkanised Central Europe to the natural expansion of two great and vigorous Powers, Mr. Chamberlain decided to flout his experts and, by a supreme effort of personal self-assertion, to break down the walls of mistrust and suspicion. By destroying the existing machinery of the League, he would create a Four Power Pact in accord with the original spirit of the Covenant.

Thus the fight for appeasement centred round two issues: could you trust the dictators, and, if you could not, could you build a collective system to resist them? On both these points Mr. Chamberlain's mind was clear. Time after time, whether he is speaking of Spain, of Czechoslovakia, of Italian propaganda in Palestine or of German activities in the Balkans, he upbraids his critics for their lack of faith in human nature, their ideological suspicions, their ungentlemanly, nay unchristian attitude to Hitler and Mussolini. Time after time he argues that no small nation can be securely guaranteed against aggression and that the attempt to do so would be tantamount to admitting the inevitability of war. In the debate on Mr. Eden's resignation he said:

> I say we must not try to delude ourselves, and still more we must not try to delude small weak nations into thinking that they will be protected by the League against aggression, and acting accordingly, when we know that nothing of the kind can be expected.

In March, 1938, he refused to give any prior guarantee to Czechoslovakia or to undertake precisely those consultations with the U.S.S.R. which are now taking place.

> The Soviet Government's proposals would appear to involve less a consultation with a view to a settlement than a concerting of action against an eventuality which has not yet arisen.

On the 4th April, 1938, he said:

> This constitutes nothing less than a proposal for an offensive and defensive alliance between France, Russia and ourselves against some other Power or group of Powers. Is that what is called Collective Security? The party opposite never bother to look inside the bottle as long as the label outside is right. . . . I am amazed at their being able to bamboozle themselves into thinking that, if they take a pre-war alliance and mumble these words over it, they can change its character and the consequences which are bound to flow from it. . . . So far from making a contribution to peace, I say it would plunge us into war.

The argument of *The Struggle for Peace*, if it were correct, would be a complete and absolute refutation of the Premier's present foreign policy. For Mr. Chamberlain was not content merely to advise appeasement as a risk worth taking; he proved to his own satisfaction that upon its success depended the future of civilisation. If we organised any resistance to the Axis, we should be betraying our trust as the peacemakers of the world.

We tend to assume to-day that business-men are imperialists because we still think of the pre-war era which Lenin analysed. But in the history of the world, the age of Joseph Chamberlain was an exception. Usually business-interests are, for obvious reasons, intensely pacific, and regard politics and politicians as intruders disturbing, with their wars and rumours of wars, the peaceful competition of trade and commerce. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century the Liberal capitalists were pacifists and opposed to imperialism. They desired not prestige and acquisition of territory, but free trade and peace: nor did they care much about forms of government, if their commerce prospered. Mr. Chamberlain belongs to this tradition. He has reverted from the Foreign Office diplomacy of his brother and the imperialism of his father to the Liberal traditions of Cobden and Bright. His overbearing motive is a desire that international politics shall not be permitted to interfere with international trade, and he is willing to see any Power rule Europe which will permit profits to prosper. The representatives of the Federation of British Industries, who sat at Dusseldorf working out cartel agreements while Hitler occupied Prague, were in his eyes the true representatives of Britain. The structure of business has changed since Cobden's days, so we can call his philosophy "Monopoly Cobdenism."

It is this disinterestedness in political principles which gives his pacifism its intensity and fervour. He hates the modern Leviathans with their panoplies of war, and longs to see them once more subservient to the needs of business. He has a moral detestation

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of war and war preparations because they upset the order and decency of capitalism and drive the statesmen to disregard the proprieties of the Budget, the peoples to thoughts of revolution.

Mr. Chamberlain was guilty of the same error as the crude Marxist who assures us that Hitler and Mussolini are the agents of capitalist interests. He too saw Fascism as a variant of our own social system, disregarded its dynamic, and conveniently left its gospel unread. War, he thought, could be abolished by a business deal between the big concerns; and if the small ones got mopped up in the process—after all that has happened in Birmingham. On November 1st, 1938, in the most illuminating speech he ever made, he virtually offered the Nazis economic control of Central Europe and summed up his attitude to China in the sentence:

> The fact that so much capital is being destroyed during this war means that even more capital will have to be put into China in the future, when the war is over. Who is going to supply that capital? Certainly not Japan. It is quite certain that when the war is over and the reconstruction of China begins, she cannot possibly be reconstructed without some help from this country.

Mr. Chamberlain cannot conceive that such a programme might seem cynical. He is not hard-hearted, but a simple believer in big-business and its beneficent power. And he only knows one enemy of business—Bolshevism, Socialism and all that. Since Hitler and Mussolini were anti-Bolshevik, he naturally assumed that they were his friends. They too would become pacifists after a little appeasement.

Of Mr. Bryant, who has added the links to the speeches, such nice things cannot be said. A bitter hatred of everything to do with progress inspires him to omit every fact which he cannot prevent. Lacking Mr. Chamberlain's moral fervour, he writes with the obsequious grace of a political toady. But perhaps he was well chosen for the task. Mr. Chamberlain's light shines more brightly in contrast to his oily smoke. R. H. CROSSMAN

NEW NOVELS

Red Strangers. By ELSPETH HUXLEY. *Chatto and Windus.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Gangway Down! By DAVE MARLOWE. *Harrap.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Burden of Tyre. By MARGARET ILES. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

No Orchids for Miss Blandish. By JAMES HADLEY CHASE. *Jarrolds.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Red Strangers is the elegy of a culture. Briefly, it is the story of the Kikuyu, an East African people, from 1890, a few years before white men made their first appearance in the region, to 1937, when Nairobi has blossomed into a city and banks and bicycles have combined with syphilis and low wages to transform the noble savage into an often ignoble specimen of the civilised man. Mrs. Huxley has cast her book in the form of a novel, but although her characters are imaginary the incidents she relates are substantially true. We see the brave Muthengi bear his circumcision without flinching, slay a Masai warrior in single combat, fight vainly against the "red strangers" and finally be promoted by them to titular chiefdom of the whole district, with twenty wives and his own car. Most of his contemporaries are less fortunate. Some are imprisoned for crimes they cannot understand, some are driven to forced labour, some conscripted and some ruined by disease in the big city. All of them, really, are symbols, with sufficient individuality to make them sympathetic but not enough to isolate them from their types. The white men are still less individual. Combining inexplicable virtues and incomprehensible vices with a noisy, apparently senseless violence and energy, they are regarded by their new subjects as dangerous natural forces that must be obeyed but cannot be understood. And so, in a sense, they are; for the colonisation of Africa was not a personal matter, and the individuals who accomplished it were as helpless before their political and economic incentives as were the peoples they dispossessed in face of firearms and railways. The tragedy of the Kikuyu is their total ignorance of what was happening to them.

The interest of *Red Strangers* is mainly anthropological, and it should make the same appeal to the reader who finds Frazer rather heavy going as *October* does to those who can't manage Marx. Spells are cast and rendered harmless, goats are flayed alive to bring good fortune, and guilt is tested at a trial by ordeal in which fierce rodents bite the noses of the accused (this last was a new one to me). Circumcisions, raiding parties, drought, marriage, all the incidents of ordinary existence are taken as excuse for detailed and picturesque expositions of the magic rituals that obsessed Kikuyu life. To-day most of it is almost forgotten; gramophone records and American films have provided a new mythology. And, snobbery and sentiment apart, I am not at all sure it is always such a bad exchange. Mrs. Huxley's anthropology is careful and correct and she resists all temptations to play up the dark passions of the primitive blood. Her style—apart from very rare lapses into the "fire-stick go bang, black man he dead, oh, plenty big magic, wah!" tradition—is admirably lucid, with occasional touches of the poetic.

> We have seen the saltlicks to which the black bongo come,
> And the copulation of the elephant. We have heard
> The talk of bees within the hollow tree, and the song of spirits
> Who hold circumcision ceremonies upon the mountain above the bamboos,

is, when arranged into lines, pure Eliot. Perhaps fortunately, the author has refrained from drawing the satirical conclusions of her subject, although anthropology provides superb material, as Professor Frazer already realised:

> In the Pelew Islands it is thought that every god can take possession of a man and speak through him. . . . The person thus chosen gives signs of the divine presence by behaving in a strange way; he gapes, runs about, and performs a number of senseless acts. At first people laugh at him, but his sacred mission is in time recognised and he is invited to assume his proper position in the State. In some of the Islands the god is political sovereign of the land.

Red Strangers, however, is not a *jeu d'esprit*, but a serious history that needs no epigrams to make it readable. Mrs. Huxley has made a first-hand study of a social earthquake, and the urbanised Kikuyu of the future will owe her their gratitude.

Gangway Down! is the first novel of Mr. Dave Marlowe, the waiter whose autobiography attracted such attention when it was discovered by Desmond MacCarthy two years ago. New writers have a natural tendency to describe their own lives, and Mr. Marlowe is so fortunate in the extent and variety of his adventures that we can readily forgive him for rewriting as fiction what he has already presented as fact. *Gangway Down!* is the beginning of a life-story. Johnnie is the illegitimate child of a dockside family, and through the sacrifices of his grandmother is sent to a small private school to learn to be a gentleman. He gets a clerical job, runs away to sea, falls in with bootleggers, signs on on a coffin ship and finally becomes deck steward on an Atlantic liner and falls in love with one of the passengers. A shipping strike compels him to decide between his prospects and his class loyalties and, after a struggle, he chooses the latter. The book ends rather abruptly at the moment of decision, and we never know the outcome of his love-affair, the strike or his soft job on the liner. Such a theme could profitably be approached in several fashions, and Mr. Marlowe has chosen, perhaps wisely, to treat it as direct narrative. We are interested in Johnnie because his environment is unfamiliar and has about it the unmistakable tang of authenticity. The dusty café-life of a southern port or the dark publics of our own East End are not introduced as patches of local colour, but taken wholly for granted. Mr. Marlowe lacks the keen eye for illuminating oddities that we have come to expect of descriptive writers, but possesses in high degree a gift of easy and observant reporting. With the scenes and characters he uses in his present novel nothing more is needed; what will happen when he has to move beyond his own direct experience still remains to be seen. *Gangway Down!* is not in any way outstanding, but it tells a good story in the old tradition, and if it is occasionally wanting in subtlety, it is also wholly free from pretentiousness and affectation.

I found *Burden of Tyre* a little too heavy for me to bear. In plot it is not altogether dissimilar from *Gangway Down!*—a dimmish young man goes to sea, has mild adventures and suffers the hardships of unemployment—but in feeling it is wholly different, and in spite of the careful verisimilitude of her settings Miss Iles frequently slips into the oldest of romantic clichés. That the idealistic Paul should feel a sentimental affection for a Liverpool prostitute is not unnatural; but that the prostitute, so uneducated she cannot handle a knife and fork and so incompetent she forgets to ask for money in advance, should recite Lady Macbeth with a depth and passion that transfigures the dingy little room, etc., etc., is a good deal too much. Paul, of course, ends by marrying the girl; it is the only way he can compete with her. Such deplorable lapses are the more to be regretted since Miss Iles can tell an excellent story and covers a wide field of experience. Not many contemporary novelists are equally at home in middle-class Provincia, on board a cargo-boat or in the doss-houses off the Mile End Road, and it is a great pity that failures of insight should mar so acute an observation. The difference between

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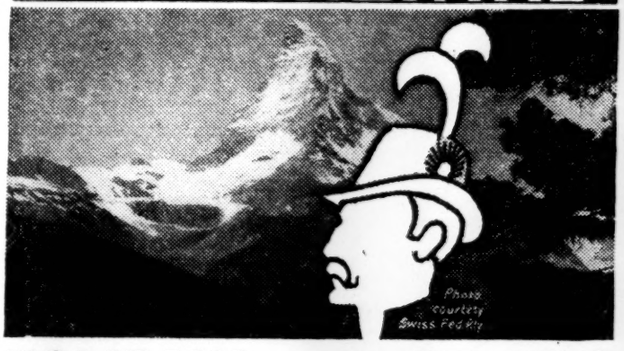

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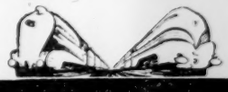

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Guys rubbed out	22 (with a rod, 9; with a tommy-gun, 6; with a knife, 3; with a black-jack, 2; by kicking, 1; by suicide, 1).
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That's Slim that was.

JOHN MAIR

SOCIAL HISTORY

The Englishman's Food: Five Centuries of English Diet.

By J. C. DRUMMOND and ANNE WILBRAHAM. *Cape.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Any true history of English food must be chiefly a history of English starvation. In the past under-nourishment has been due almost as much to ignorance as to poverty; but since the war it has at last been discovered what foods, and how much of them, are necessary. Yet even to-day more than half the population get less to eat than their health requires. *The Englishman's Food* contains over 500 pages, and to have produced it at so low a price is a public service, for the facts it contains deserve the widest possible circulation. Moreover, to read it is a pleasure as well as a duty; learned and well-written, it is a mine of curious information, which must fascinate anyone interested in social history.

Here are a few oddments to suggest the richness of material included in this survey. In the Middle Ages there was a large production of wine, mostly white, in the monasteries—an industry which was ended by their dissolution. Hops, introduced from Flanders early in the fifteenth century, were at first considered an adulteration, and consequently forbidden by the order of Henry VIII. The meat of porpoise, seal and whale was enjoyed in medieval times, but went out of fashion at the end of the sixteenth century. Fish was usually eaten after instead of before the meat-course until the seventeenth century. Tea, introduced about the same time as coffee and chocolate, in the middle of the seventeenth century, did not become popular for over a hundred years. (In 1700, twenty thousand pounds were imported; in 1800, twenty million.) It was generally believed that the moral characteristics of a woman were imbibed with her milk, and the consequent dangers were not confined to infants, for in the seventeenth century old men and invalids were provided with wet-nurses. (Dr. Caius, the founder of the Cambridge College, became "peevish and full of frets because his wet-nurse was froward of conditions.") Rhubarb as a fruit appeared at the end of the eighteenth century, and soda-water was first made commercially in 1790, whereupon it at once won a reputation as a remedy for hangovers. Tomatoes were introduced early in the nineteenth century, and, though believed to be an aphrodisiac, were used chiefly as decorations; only in 1880 did they appear in the regular market, and even then they were absurdly supposed to cause cancer. The authors expose a number of still current fallacies. Soups, they explain, are not fattening; toast is not less fattening than bread; meat extract is not nutritious—it merely stimulates appetite and digestion; brown sugar is not sweeter than white, or beet-sugar than cane. The reconstituted cream which we now get in big cities is the same as ordinary cream, and the reason some of us like it less is that it is fresher and has not been subject to bacterial action.

A prodigality of such facts makes *The Englishman's Food* most entertaining, but the background of such a history is inevitably black. In the Middle Ages crops were always poor, owing to ignorance of agricultural methods, and most livestock had to be slaughtered at the beginning of each winter. Spices were the only foodstuffs to be imported in bulk. Consequently a bad harvest entailed widespread starvation. In late Tudor times the debasement of currency caused a rise in prices, and the Merrie England of Queen Elizabeth suffered from chronic famine. During the seventeenth century agricultural methods improved, and in the early years of the eighteenth, according to Defoe, "the working manufacturing people of England eat the fat, drink the sweet, live better and fare better, than the working poor of any other nation." But later in the century the barest necessities of life became scarce and dear, while gin was plentiful and cheap. Potatoes—the most valuable result of the discovery of America—were eaten only in the North, and the attempt to popularise rice was a failure. (It seems always to have been an English characteristic to prefer under-nourishment to unfamiliar foods: this book contains the elaborate menu of a hippophagic banquet given at the Langham Hotel in 1868, but unluckily the stupid prejudice against horse-meat proved indestructible.) The development of canals facilitated the transport of food—in the early eighteenth century poultry still came on foot to London from Norfolk—but poverty became increasingly acute, and in the first half of the nineteenth century under-nourishment was more widespread than it had been since the great dearths of medieval and Tudor times. The children suffered most, and the children even of the rich were often half-starved, for it was not known that a child of 14 needed as much nourishment as an adult, and a child of six at least half as much. Adulteration further reduced the value of such food as was obtainable. But with the introduction of margarine in the 'seventies and of refrigerated meat in the 'eighties, enormous supplies of fats and protein became available. Still most people in this country do not now have enough to eat. It is true that a remarkable improvement has been effected: the average height of twelve-year-old boys in an industrial town like Leeds is now three inches greater than it was in 1911, but it remains two inches smaller than that of the adequately fed boys of the Public School class. (Average stature is one good test of diet.) Free meals or milk can now be given to elementary schoolchildren on the recommendations of teachers, but "a child may appear well-nourished even to the expert eye and yet be suffering from marked nutritional deficiency." Moreover, the reports of school medical officers show the most bewildering discrepancies, since there are no accepted standards. Professor Drummond, who occupies the Chair of Bio-chemistry at University College, London, reinforces the conclusions contained in Sir John Orr's Report. But the thought of most of the population, and particularly of children, suffering from chronic under-nourishment, is so unpleasant that many nice, kind people prefer to deny the facts.

Lack of particular foods has been as damaging in our history as general shortage. Galen had decided, in the second century, that fruit was dangerous—his father, he declared, as a result of never tasting it, had lived to be a hundred. Consequently, doctors for century after century continued to advise against fruit, especially for children. Moreover, green vegetables were little grown in England till the arrival of the Flemish Protestants in the sixteenth century. (The art of gardening, which we consider so particularly English, is one of the countless benefits we owe to our past generosity to refugees.) Until the later years of the eighteenth century almost all the population, including the rich, were more or less scorbutic through not eating enough vegetables and fruit. The poor despised the vegetable soups which have been for so long an excellent mainstay of the French, and subsisted on bread and cheese, and, when they could afford it, meat. The introduction of white "roller-mill" bread some sixty years ago aggravated the ill-health caused by this unhealthy diet: as a result of their incomprehensible taste for this insipid stuff, 70 per cent. of the population get less vitamin B1 than good health requires. To forbid the sale of such bread would vastly improve the public health, but what politician would have the courage to propose such a prohibition? The sale of unpasteurised milk is even more indefensible, since three times out of four it contains dangerous bacilli. But governments and philanthropists continue to spend millions upon millions in curing diseases that are due only to faulty diet. Our fields fall out of cultivation, and our population starves. Two things are needed: first, to abolish the poverty which makes adequate nourishment unobtainable; secondly, to persuade people, when they have the

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means, to adopt a properly balanced diet. Perhaps the foreign threat to our safety and wealth will succeed where common humanity and sense have failed; and in order to provide enough cannon-fodder we shall at last see that at any rate young males no longer starve. RAYMOND MORTIMER

A REAL ACADEMIC ARTIST

Alfred Stevens. By KENNETH ROMNEY TOWNDROW. *Constable.* 21s.

Complaining that the Royal Academy was unacademic, I was at some pains a year or so ago to indicate what, in my opinion, a genuine academic artist should be. Perhaps I should have done better to spare my pen and point to Alfred Stevens. Of course I am not suggesting that it would be possible to compose an academy of Alfred Stevenses; Stevens was an artist of immense talent and some genius, and such are rare at the best of times. But of any academy that understood its business Alfred Stevens would be the ideal. A master-craftsman, he understood and appreciated the masters from whom he gathered inspiration; his knowledge of the past—of certain periods in the past—was extensive and penetrating; his artistic conscience was exemplary; his passion for perfection amounted to mania almost. Need I add that he was insulted and despised or ignored by most of the Royal Academicians of his day—the mid-nineteenth century—and that he returned the sentiment? He did not "believe in the academy," he said. Nevertheless, of English painters and sculptors he and Reynolds are probably the only two who would be suitable candidates for that Academy which is in Heaven.

When, however, I called Alfred Stevens a genuine academic artist, I had in mind something less obvious than the fact that he was the very antithesis of an ordinary Royal Academician. What distinguishes him from other artists of equal gifts, what makes me call him academic, is that he seems to have been almost wholly inspired—and inspired at times he was—by works of art. There is nothing offensive in this criticism, which might be applied to artists as great as Poussin and Virgil, which must be applied to the Carracci, Puvis, Alfieri and Hérédia. All the same, it is emphatically not a characteristic of Shakespeare, Giotto or Mozart. From it springs naturally that academic conviction, disastrous when stupidly imposed but capable of being profitably applied, that art can be learned. Stevens, who was anything but stupid, would never have supposed, for all that he had learned so much from the masters and to such good purpose, that a willing pupil could be taught to be an artist as he can be taught to be a stenographer. But when he states publicly, "I think that technical skill depends upon the knowledge of the pupil," one suspects that the academic sympathies of one who owed much to his own studies had got the better of what daily experience must have taught a great and versatile craftsman. That technical skill is more a matter of knack than of knowledge may be illustrated by a modern instance. Probably no English painter of his time had more knowledge than Ricketts—of his exceptional taste I say nothing; yet he lacked so completely technical skill—and not for want of trying to acquire it—that he found himself unable to render precisely the simplest visual facts. Also, that passion for perfection, which does Stevens credit, but which complicated his life, causing him endless misery and us immeasurable loss, was it not partly the result of bearing always in mind, as an ideal, the inimitable masterpieces of others rather than his own personal conceptions?

Alfred Stevens was a fine, and perhaps a great, artist. You need go no farther than the Tate or the Victoria and Albert, or, indeed, the photographs in Mr. Towndrow's book to see that. If the Wellington memorial is not wholly satisfying that is not entirely, perhaps not chiefly, the artist's fault. Compare the lovely competition model at South Kensington with the finished work in St. Paul's, and then try to apportion the blame fairly between the artist's proper indecision (an aspect of the passion for perfection) and the brutal stupidity of officials and ecclesiastics. There are things from Dorchester House worthy of the Renaissance artists whom he loved and understood, and followed perhaps too reverently. Those little cast lions, which anyone can look at, which no one does look at, any day of the week as he passes the Record Office, are miracles of charm and ingenuity—the happiest solution of an odd problem, to model a lion sitting on a space one third of its height. And besides being an artist, Stevens was a prodigiously gifted workman who, apparently, found it easy to master, and excel in, a multiplicity of crafts. Here was the man with the power and the will to carry on the tradition of Wren and give London, what London most lacks, monuments worthy of a great and ancient capital. He was allowed to do next to nothing. That is the tragedy. The greatest English visual artist of the Victorian age (Constable died in '37), the one Englishman since Wren, with the doubtful exception of Nash, capable of conceiving and carrying out urban embellishment in the grand manner, happened to flourish at the very moment when taste and sentiment touched the depths of degradation. By sheer mischance the talents and energy of Stevens were available at the moment when British taste was the taste of Queen Victoria and Mr. Gladstone for Boehm, Landseer and Gilbert Scott. *Nous avons changé tout cela.* Have we? I wonder whether modern geologists would feel much enthusiasm for those noble doors designed for the museum in Jermyn Street, and how much the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's would like that exciting *Adam and Eve* intended for the dome.

Mr. Towndrow has given us a pious, thorough and useful book, for which we must be grateful. Unfortunately, he is a clumsy writer:

> It is quite understandable that the patron must have been considerably disturbed by signs in the child which made it unthinkable that such talents should not be recognised without further delay and given their proper training and opportunity.

This is not appetising. But the reader should persist; for Mr. Towndrow has interesting and even important things to tell us, and the adventures recorded in the first chapter are strange enough to stir the most sluggish imagination. Naturally, but regrettably, the author in his piety falls into the error of overpraising; at one moment seeming to suggest that his hero was a match for Michelangelo, at another coupling his name with that of Ingres. In the same spirit he heaps abuse on Victorian officialdom, administrative and artistic, not unjustly—that would be impossible almost—but indiscreetly. It is often less effective to call something one does not like "gross and decadent" than to call it gross on one page and decadent on another. But when all is said, this is a book to read. I hope it will be read; and I hope the author will succeed in his manifest purpose, which is to stimulate interest in an artist who, though generally treated with the utmost respect, is, I agree, too little admired. CLIVE BELL

POLITICAL CATHOLICISM

Crisis for Christianity. By WILLIAM TEELING. *Gifford.* 10s. 6d.

The author of this book, Mr. William Teeling, is introduced on the cover as a well-known Catholic, for many years in touch with Vatican and International Roman Catholic circles, who was accused of criticising Vatican foreign politics under the late Pope without sufficient proofs. He now replies to the charge in a record of his experiences and impressions of the religious situation in Germany and in Austria since the rise to power of the Nazis.

In *Crisis for Christianity* Mr. Teeling's intention to be fair and engrossment in his subject are conspicuous. It is evident that he has studied modern papal policies with the greatest diligence. His book is full of informative matter, and it is written from an angle which will be fresh to English readers who have had little opportunity of acquainting themselves with the effects of political Catholicism. After some preliminary observations on the connection between religion and politics, Mr. Teeling provides in eight chapters an account of the part religion has played in Central Europe from the first rivalries of the Hapsburg and Hohenzollern up to the fall of the Centre or Catholic party in the Reichstag on Hitler's accession to power. A useful account of the Concordat, promoted by von Papen in the first month of the Nazi regime, interviews with clerics, Innitzer, Pacelli, etc., and with prominent German political Catholics, impressions gained from Catholic laymen in various centres, and descriptions with much quotation of the new "World Outlook," preached by Rosenberg and his kind in the Nazi party, fill up much of the remainder of the book.

Mr. Teeling is not concerned with his own political feelings which (he explains) are all in favour of a free democracy as a form of government; and he excludes all but practical considerations from his survey of papal action, or inaction, in Hitler's Germany. The Church claims to be in possession of unchanging rights conferred by a Divine Founder; but with the world as it is, it may, when actively opposed, often be content with mere toleration, and even make Concordats with States which profess doctrines in contradiction with its vital teaching. In this connection, for

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instance, Mr. Teeling shows that when the Concordat of 1933 with Nazi Germany was signed—by one clause of which the Holy See ordered that none of its ecclesiastics should take part in political activities—the Vatican must have known very well of the Nazi proposals for the sterilisation of the unfit; these proposals were bound to be openly opposed by the German bishops and clergy.

But the Vatican is ready to support widely different policies, as circumstances dictate. Thus political Catholicism in post-war Austria allied itself with a brand of Fascism, whereas in pre-Nazi Germany the Catholic Church seemed to be supporting Democracy. Mr. Teeling makes it clear, however, that the Vatican under the late Pope drew a distinction between the Authoritarian State and the Totalitarian; Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* indicated an Authoritarian ideal, whereas the Totalitarian State, like the Liberal, was regarded at the Vatican as a product of the modernist errors, denounced in the famous Syllabus of Pope Pius IX. It was even a dream of the Austrian clerics that the German States might return to Austrian paternalism, their escape from which was one of the achievements of the campaign of German Liberalism for national unity, fought in 1848. But Monsignor Seipel, the leader of Austrian political Catholicim and a principal originator of the *Quadragesimo Anno*, succeeded in alienating not only the Austrian workers but even the peasants, anti-clerical though practising Catholics; his leadership failed in competition with Nazism, in fact it helped to give Nazism to Austria.

With whom then—the Vatican, the German bishops or the political Catholic parties—lies the responsibility for the sorry plight in which 30 per cent. of Germans find themselves to-day, obliged to be bad Catholics if they submit to Nazism, and bad citizens if they do not? This is the question to which Mr. Teeling is by way of chiefly addressing himself; and we get in his book some interesting glimpses of deep issues and recriminations within the fold. The Centre Party had always been unpopular with the generality of the German people; it provided excuse for anti-clericalism by allowing the priests to identify themselves with and control all its activities. Moreover, the Church was so organised that it was partly accountable for the breakdown of its own system.

Mr. Teeling entertains no doubt that a rival theocracy, the creation of Rosenberg and the Nazi Left Wing, is now in serious competition with the Catholic Church in Central Europe. If the Nazi Radicals win they may even "force the remnants of Catholicism down to the level of the ghetto." The Church, one cannot but think, having sown the wind by its opposition to the liberal spirit which at first inspired and should have been allowed to guide German Nationalism, is now reaping the whirlwind.

J. M. HONE

COOL TRANSLUCENT VERSE

Autumn Journal. By LOUIS MACNEICE. *Faber.* 6*s.*

This is Mr. MacNeice's journal of the crisis. Of course, it is not really a journal and a writer cannot attain in verse, whatever Mr. MacNeice may say, the "objective and clear-cut honesty" he puts over everything else. "Beauty is truth, etc.," remains, alas, the half-truth which conditions poetry. However, *Autumn Journal* is vivid and sometimes lovely reporting:

> Hitler yells on the wireless,
> The night is damp and still,
> And I hear dull blows on wood outside my window;
> They are cutting down the trees on Primrose Hill.
> The wood is white like the roast flesh of chicken,
> Each tree falling like a closing fan;
> No more looking at the view from seats beneath the branches,
> Everything is going to plan;
> They want the crest of this hill for anti-aircraft,
> The guns will take the view
> And searchlights probe the heavens for bacilli
> With narrow wands of blue.

That, with its final reminiscence of Isherwood, gives a good idea of Mr. MacNeice's method; his regularity of metre, concision of phrase, vividly precise imagery. In all these he is the opposite of Mr. Spender, with whom he has sometimes been bracketed. It is a singularly cool and refreshing verse this to read, all in ice-blues, whites and tender pinks. Why Mr. MacNeice, in his spare time, is not *the* roving reporter of Fleet Street—barring Mr. Hickey—I cannot determine. On sports, processions or Parliament he would be worth his weight in gold. How much of his *Autumn Journal* is admirable:

> December the nineteenth: over the black roofs
> An' the one black paint-brush poplar,
> The white steam rises and deploys in puffs
> From the house-hidden railway, a northern
> Geyser erupting in a land of lava,
> But white can be still whiter, for now
> The dun air starts to jig with specks that circle
> Like microbes under a lens; this is the first snow;
> And soon the specks are feathers blandly sidling,
> Inconsequent as the fancies of young girls,
> And the air has filled like a dance-hall,
> A waltz of white dresses and strings of pearls.

Whatever he is writing of the same images return: London streets and dance-halls, seaside beaches, excursion trains, the form room, the country house, Oxford and Primrose Hill. The Borzoi, too, comes back like a signature tune. His is a curiously detached Muse; personal relationships seem to play a very small part in his verse.

> . . . her voice is faintly heard
> Through walls and walls of indifference and abstraction
> And across the London roofs,

reminds one that, even for Mr. MacNeice, this, after all, is the source of inspiration. But he is moved by a larger theme; and he has the measure to control it. I have been severely cross-qnestioned on the matter of readability lately, but I think Mr. MacCarthy would agree with me that MacNeice is remarkably readable. At any rate, I can affirm that I have read every word of this long poem with attention and pleasure.

G. W. STONIER

MORE FALLEN BASTIONS

Eleventh Hour. By VINCENT SHEEAN. *Hamish Hamilton.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Readers of *In Search of History*, that best of all "journalists' books," have had a long time to wait for its sequel. Now it has come at last—after nearly five years. *Eleventh Hour*, dealing with the author's experiences, chiefly in Spain, in Germany and in Czechoslovakia at the time of Munich, is an admirable job, an admirable series of what the French would call *reportages*. But *In Search of History* was something much more than a "job"; and that is the chief difference between the two books. *Eleventh Hour* is more impersonal; the author appears only incidentally, usually driving an expensive car and accompanied by his wife; he is, outwardly at least, the prosperous American journalist, and no longer the kind of journalistic playboy of the Western World that he was in his earlier book; he goes to the obvious copy-producing places like Prague in September, and stays, like all other journalists, at the Majestic in Barcelona and at the Victoria in Madrid.

The *imprévu*, the fascinating strangeness of Sheean's earlier adventures—for instance in the Riff War and in China—are lacking; and one looks in vain in his new book for such unforgettable characters as the Poincaré, the Abd 'el Krim, Madame Sun Yat Sen or the Borodin of *In Search of History*.

And yet, *Eleventh Hour* still makes fascinating reading, and still contains many of the fine qualities of its predecessor. Sheean has a magnificent eye for detail, and if he has produced here no great characters, some of his incidental characters are superbly alive—for instance the grim, black-browed mistress of the Horse's Neck, a wayside inn on the Carlsbad road, and its defiant and distrustful inmates, all completely stultified by Nazi propaganda; or all those lovely, lovable people with whom Sheean travelled in a bus from Valencia to Madrid:

> I never travelled in such a merry company. They talked all the time, made jokes, laughed without ceasing. There was an elderly woman who became the recognised humorist of the bus. She was quiet to begin with, but her rather strident voice individualised itself sharply before the first hour was over. . . . She was a worker in a factory up the Guadalajara road; her husband had been killed at Madrid; she had three sons at various fronts; she wore the red star; and she had the most wonderful Spanish vocabulary I ever heard. Her language was the rich lusty language of the people, full of references to the physical organs and functions, to sexual activities, to fear, courage, hunger, work, death; it was also brilliantly funny. . . . The man sitting next to me—some sort of government functionary or clerk, very respectable—was shocked, above all because these things were said in the hearing of a foreigner.
>
> "This woman talks very bad language," he explained to me in an undertone; "you must not think that other people talk like that.

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Holiday Suggestions Continued on Page 875

She is very bad." . . . The same man turned to me with an air of importance when we reached Tarancon late that afternoon and said: "The second husband of Isabel II was born here. He was a Spaniard." The town was half-ruined by bombs . . . etc.

The book is full of such bright human touches.

What makes Sheean's "journalistic" books so outstanding is, among other things, his extraordinarily fine human sensibility; his sharp reactions at the sight of all suffering and injustice and human degradation. He knows that the prohibition to Jews in Germany to sit down on a bench in the park is something more infinitely degrading and humiliating than—the absence of a public school tie. And the most terrifying thing, to him, in Europe to-day is the gradual degradation and bestialisation of the German people themselves.

What Hitler has done to young Germany—the youth which he trains and from which he recruits his gangsters—is even more horrible, in the long run . . . than his persecution of the Jews.

He reacts with equal bitterness to the betrayal of Czechoslovakia and especially of the Spanish Republic. But the latter, at least, has not died completely in vain. "The name of Madrid will lie forever across the mind of man. . . . In this one place, if nowhere else, the dignity of the common man has stood firm against the world."

His chapter called "The Thirteen Bus," dealing with London, and criticising this, that and the next thing, is a trifle on the light, bright side. Except for his lovely brainwave of accosting a white-haired lady standing outside Selfridge's and of saying to her:

"Madam, do you know anything about the Ebro? It is a river flowing down Oxford Street." . . . If I told her that she would be sure I was a lunatic.

One wonders if she would be quite so sure to-day—after March 15th, and after Franco's victory? A. W.

Special Undeclared War. By FRANK OLIVER, with an Introduction by PETER FLEMING. *Jonathan Cape.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Frank Oliver has described the first eighteen months of a war which Mr. Peter Fleming in his Introduction suggests "may well prove of more import to what we call civilisation than all the current posturings and alarums west of Suez." This is the first picture of the war on all fronts, told by a foreign correspondent who has lived in China for fifteen years, in the south and east and north, who has travelled along the Yangtse, across Inner Mongolia and through Manchuria. The map of China has no complications for him. Japan's "undeclared war"—the "incident" as she still calls it—has brought her far less than she anticipated when a minor incident at the Marco Polo bridge outside Peking in July, 1937, precipitated the war. Mr. Oliver describes the ruthlessness and cruelty of the Japanese invaders, their behaviour in Nanking and the scenes of desolation which have followed their efforts to "make war on the oppressive Chinese government for the sake of the Chinese people." He quotes a mass of first-hand evidence to illustrate the development of the Chinese untrained forces which have at length become an army capable both of positional warfare and of those guerilla tactics which are making Japanese consolidation of "occupied" areas a difficult if not an impossible task. But the war in China is not only a military affair. Political issues of unity, the gradual emergence of democratic institutions like the Peoples' Political Council, are the basis of her struggle. This exciting and creative aspect of the Chinese war Mr. Oliver overlooks.

About Motoring

MOTORING REVOLUTIONISED

I STILL recall my press trial of the original Austin Seven motor car. It was rightly acclaimed as one of the seven wonders of the modern world, and replicas of it were built under licence in America, France, Germany, and for all I know, elsewhere as well. We all envied its brilliant inventor the royalties which each successive chassis poured into his pocket. Nevertheless, in spite of its mechanical excellence, its marvellous capabilities, its tenacious durability, and an almost world-wide popularity, it was not in those days a good motor car except in so far as quality and capability were factors of its price. If a man or a woman bought one of the early Baby Austins it was poverty rather than will which consented to the purchase. If we bought one, we bought it because we could afford nothing better. In that first press trial I was almost stupefied to observe how willing and lively the tiny car was, with two large adults in front, and two small children astern. But expert though I deemed myself, I found the small sensitive clutch quite difficult on first acquaintance. I was liable to "lose the prop" in a start on the level, and became quite anxious in a start against a perceptible grade. Comfort was of a very low order on any but the most velvety of roads; on the ordinary knobbly country road, disfigured by the frequent potholes of that era, even a quadruple live load could not prevent the merry little vehicle from imitating a nervous hare taking sighting hops through coarse grass. We all admired the car; but those of us who bought it consciously envisaged a day when we could afford something bigger and better.

All that is changed. To-day the market is full of small cars which—subject to one exception only—the most fastidious motorist can and should buy without a qualm. Consider, for example, the latest Italian Fiat model, known as the "500." It weighs 10 cwt. It averages between 50 and 60 miles to a gallon of petrol. It has four gears, and can touch 38 m.p.h. on third and 52 m.p.h. on top. A gallon of lubricating oil lasts it for 2,000 miles. It will climb a 25 per cent. gradient on its bottom gear under full load. The cushion of each front seat measures 17½ inches wide by 16½ inches deep. The driver's leg reach can be set to 41 inches. The height between seat and roof is 37 inches. The rear seat (of the bench type) is 41 inches wide by 19 inches deep. There are seven or eight colour options. The springing is entirely adequate. The clutch does not require a tap dancer for its operation, but can be operated gracefully by a police boot or a heavyweight boxer. If its speed and dimensions satisfy an enquirer, he need not hesitate to buy, even if he be royal. It is not only a tiny motor car—it is a *good* motor car. I select it as a text not because it is better than small British cars; it is no better than half a dozen of them, nor is it necessarily cheaper than they. It points my moral mainly because it is so excessively small.

And the moral is that—subject to one exception awaiting definition—the small motor car of to-day is good enough for anybody in the world. There is, inevitably, a marked speed deficit. No car taxed at five guineas can hold its own across country with a large car. But how often can we use the speed of a large car? At the moment I own a car rated at 25 h.p., and capable of 80 m.p.h. Every now and then I use it to visit a friend whose door is precisely 334 miles from my door. I make this trip in an average time of eight hours. I could not equal this time on a Baby Fiat, nor on a Morris or Austin or Standard Eight. But on any of these cars I could cover the same trip at mid-week in about ten hours. Moreover, on my own 25 h.p. I should certainly require ten hours at week-ends or at holiday times, when the baby car would be just as speedy in thick traffic as an 80 m.p.h. car. In other words, the superior speed of the large car is only usable at slack times, when the roads are comparatively empty; and at such times 99 per cent. of the motoring fraternity are unable to use the roads, because their professional duties tie them to the office or factory. To put it another way, a man who can only motor on pleasure at week-ends and holidays is paying the difference in cost between owning and running a Baby Fiat and a Rolls-Royce for motives which are partly dimensional and partly ostentatious.

That epithet "dimensional" is important. The small car remains as unsuitable to-day as ever it was for really corpulent individuals and for really large loads. The medium or large car is still essential for the fat man, the stout woman, the quintuple party, and passengers desirous of transporting a great deal of luggage. For ten-stone individuals, for two slender adults with children, and for persons of normal size who travel light in respect of impediments, the small car is nowadays a ferocious competitor of the large car; and would threaten its existence even more formidably if human psychology were not so firmly based on the instinct of ostentation. I may be an utter nobody. My entire life history may fail to reveal a single achievement which is not commonplace, my whole character may lack a single redeeming trait; but if my late revered Aunt Tabitha left me a few thousands, and I choose to invest a couple of them in the latest model Bentley, on the road—if nowhere else—I spasmodically pose as a somebody. I can sweep past my betters with an air. At hotels and garages, servile menials tumble over each other to open my car doors. And this illogical and rather hateful trick of ostentation is not confined to the plutocratic cars. Like the reek of a brewery which is noseable, if more faintly, as distance increases, so down each grade of the car ownership ladder, every owner is able to patronise (if only in his own mind) owners of smaller or cheaper or shabbier cars. In Laburnum Avenue, most of the tenants own baby cars, but the proud owner of Mon Repos stables a 20 h.p. Studebaker. In appearance it is more aggressive than the babies; in length, it can boast a good two feet more bonnet and tail; its inner furnishings are more opulent; it can reckon an additional three or four convenience gadgets. And on Sunday mornings

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Singleton Park, Swansea. EDWIN DREW, Registrar.

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Applications, together with testimonials (copies only) should be addressed to the GENERAL SECRETARY, Civil Service Clerical Association, 2 Upper Belgrave Street, S.W.1, not later than June 15th, 1939.

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HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS
—continued from page 873

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AT WELWYN you avoid both suburban dullness and Central London's expensive discomfort. King's Cross is only half an hour away, and the pleasant Hertfordshire countryside comes nearly to the centre of the town. Our newest three-bedroom houses for sale, £650–£898; four bedrooms, £1,050 to £1,200—the latter also to rent from £92 to £100. Illustrated details on request from N. S. WILLIAMS, Estate Office, Welwyn Garden City. Welwyn Garden 3456.

RHOSSILLY, Gower Coast. Bungalow in 7 acres on cliffs, quiet bathing sands; 4 bedrooms, bathroom, sitting-room, kitchen. August and September 4 *guineas* for 4 weeks; 3 *guineas* 8 weeks. Box 5161.

GLORIOUS situation below Crockham Hill. Modern labour-saving house, 4/6 bedrooms, spacious garden, to be let, furnished or unfurnished. Box 5162.

COMFORTABLY furnished modernised three-bedroomed house to let, August 12th–26th; near Dulwich Park. Dining room, lounge, kitchen, scullery; small garden. Radio, piano, typewriter, books. Telephone: Brixton 2863.

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MAISONETTE in Chelsea, with studio in own garden, to let from July, furnished or unfurnished, for three months or longer. Box 5140.

FLAT for two, Bloomsbury. To let three months from June 30th. 3½ *guineas*. 'Phone: Terminus 4171 before 9.30 a.m. or after 7 p.m.

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CHISWICK. FURNISHED ROOMS. Charming old-world private house. Recommended by *N.S. & N.* reader. Service, garden, mooring rights, near tennis, golf. Chiswick 0160.

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CHARMING BIJOU GUEST HOUSE, newly decorated and furnished. Hot and cold. Garden. Rooms, including breakfast, dinner, bath, light, 2 *guineas*. weekly. Few minutes Marble Arch and near tube station. 80 Maida Vale, W.9. Mai. 1930.

GOLDERS GREEN, close Tube and Heath. Select house, newly decorated single and double rooms. H. and c., partial board, moderate. 5, Templars Ave. SPE. 0748.

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FURNISHED and unfurnished room in quiet pleasant house. Meals if required. 18s. 6d. to 32s. 6d. 22 Belsize Avenue, N.W.3. Primrose 1043.

W.C.1. 12 Bedford Place, Bloomsbury Square. Exceptionally nice divan room, large, suiting quiet gentleman, £2 5s. Some at 32s. 6d. H. and c. basins, superior house, every comfort, breakfast and service. MUSeum 1551.

A BACK WITH A VIEW over lovely gardens. 15 minutes Piccadilly. From 25s. Bed-B'fast. 37s. 6d. part board. Billiards. Table Tennis. FLATLETS (unfurn.), alcove basins, kitchenettes, private baths, from 18s. 6d. BED-SITTING rooms (unfurn.), running h. & c. from 12s. 6d. Catering optional. 11 Clifton Gardens, W.9. ABErcorn 3035.

ETON AVENUE, Swiss Cottage. Those interested in International Friendship, good food and hot baths, ring Pri. 6466. 2 *gns.* per week.

HYDE PARK. 82 Sussex Gardens, W.2. Ambassador 2941. H. and c. basins. 5s. 6d. nightly with breakfast, from 23s. 6d. weekly.

16 DOUGHTY STREET, W.C.1. Furnished room, ground floor. Newly decorated. Water. MRS. ROWAN. HOL. 7535.

55 SEYMOUR STREET, W.1. Attractive luxurious suites, 5 *gns.* Also service rooms with breakfast from 2 *gns.* single, double 3½ *gns.* Latest equipment. Paddington 8701.

BACHELOR ROOM. Near British Museum. 15s. Suit teacher, journalist. Write BM BCGX, W.C.1.

SUNNY room overlooking garden in freshly decorated house. 15/- per week includes hot water, cupboards. Electric cooker and fire provided. Service available. MAUGER, 19 Lambolle Road, N.W.3. Pri. 7393.

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LARGE furnished room, 10s. 6d. Maida Vale. Box 5184

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ROOM or inexpensive flat wanted. River or pleasant outlook. Central. Box 5193.

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LECTURE room (seating 80) available for social meetings, lectures, pupils' concerts, etc. For terms, apply SECRETARY, 34 Nottingham Place, W.1.

FURNISHING

MODERN FURNISHINGS. See our furniture at 312 King's Road, Chelsea. Open 8 o'clock; Sat., 8.30. FLA. 9970.

when Laburnum Avenue disgorges the populace for its weekly jaunt to Brighton, the Brown-Joneses with their lanky black Studebaker emerge on to the pavement with an air which stirs hate and envy opposite every tiny white gate all along the street. But the baby cars will get to Brighton just as surely, just as speedily and at about a quarter the outlay. R. E. DAVIDSON

Week-end Competitions

No. 483

Set by Charles Bertram

Messrs. Lyons make the practice of advertising their hotels with prose poems entitled "Two can stay in Town." This method might be adapted to obtaining new readers for THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. We offer the usual prizes for the most persuasive advertisements. If possible the original should be studied.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, June 9th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 481

Set by Fred Oyster

We offer the usual prizes for the best animal fable in prose or verse (250 words or 24 lines). New anecdotes and new morals welcome. Extra points awarded for erudition in natural history.

Report by Fred Oyster

A great variety of animals has appealed to modern Aesops. Goat and horse, lion and ant-lion, snail, Panda, tortoise and mole, worms galore, appear in the list. Here is a whole zoo.

The sealion barks, the lion replies,
A tireless civet sighs.

Many of these new fables are charming, instructive, and vividly told. It is very difficult to choose between them. For a long time I paused over the ant-lion who looked at himself in the mirror and roared out a challenge to all the other animals, which they accepted, not being able to see him. There was a charming scene between Cat and Caterpillar on the Brighton Road as the cars honked past. The Panda was denounced for peacocking it. The Mole and the Tortoise debated skilfully on deep shelters. All these were good and I paused some time over them. But it seemed to me that Surroundus, Mene (address please) and Harriet Hopkins had a little extra wit and charm. They therefore share the prizes. Here they are.

FIRST PRIZE

A Snail, seeing a Lover rend his hair in despair, did fall a-laughing. On one a king him wherefore he was so full of Mirth, he did thus make reply: why should I not laugh to see one so discomfited when I am myself both Male and Female in one, and of this pitiful supplication have no need. The questioner was silenced at this.

SURROUNDUS

SECOND PRIZE
THE WORM AS HERO
OR
THE HERO AS WORM

A little green worm who rejoiced in the name of Bonellia found life hard. He was compelled to swim about in search of food in the first stage of his development and food did not seem so easy to procure. Whether it was the result of this meagre existence and the induced process of slimming he gradually grew smaller and smaller. Still he could secure little or nothing to his liking, and on the eve of his transition into a full-blown worm (though the phrase is merely courteous) he was feeling so hungry and had become so attenuated that he crept into a large cave that was near and prepared for death.

Happily his choice had been under the special supervision of Providence, for the cave into which he had crept was in actual fact the reproductive duct of a female of the species.

After this momentous discovery, he realised the true inwardness of his position and became a national worm hero, for he had solved the problem of doing nothing and living in a state of erotic and economic ecstasy. Among the Nematodes, Cestodes and Trematodes, he is already a legend and songs are written about his glorious career.

MENE

THIRD PRIZE
THE COCK AND THE NYMPH

A cock, by Cupid's dart betray'd
Became enamour'd of a maid,
A lusty nymph, who night and morn
Came to the yard dispensing corn.
The rooster saw, with jealous pain
His fellow fowls receive the grain,
And spurning his allotted task
He sought in Betty's eye to bask.
Grown un-uxorious, he pined,
All traffic with his hens declined,
While they, indignant at neglect,
Laid nought for Betty to collect.
Briskly she strode to find the cause
Of this depletion of her stores:
"Our cock's grown idle, overfed?
He'll serve to make us soup instead."
Doom'd by the hand of his desired,
Protesting, Chantecleer expired.

MORAL

O fowls, of womankind beware,
For woman is a gin and snare.
Or, if you fall, pray be correct,
Your homely spouse do not neglect.
Discretion is a virtue great—
As Chantecleer found out too late.

HARRIET HOPKINS

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 335.—PINKIE

"I hear," said Inspector Lollipop, "that Pinkie's had a telegram."

"That's right, sir," said his sergeant. "This is a copy of it." He tore a leaf from his notebook:

"*Three letters in each group. Dividing letter, G.*"

"And you think," said Lollipop, "that this will help us to decipher the code-message?"

"I'm sure of it, sir. Positive."

This was the code-message:

106723	06290	7428
24833	84104	4015

It's not a very hard one. Can you decipher it?

PROBLEM 333.—THREESOME

Solution by G. Alan Montgomerie.

Lachesis had two 2's.

The only totals providing sufficient different sets of scores are;

14 (9 sets) 239, 248, 257, 266, 338, 347, 356, 446, 455.
15 (10 sets) 249, 258, 267, 339, 348, 357, 366, 447, 456, 555.
16 (10 sets) 259, 268, 277, 349, 358, 367, 448, 457, 466, 556.
17 (10 sets) 269, 278, 359, 368, 377, 449, 458, 467, 557, 566.
18 (10 sets) 279, 288, 369, 378, 459, 468, 477, 558, 567, 666.
19 (9 sets) 289, 379, 388, 469, 478, 559, 568, 577, 667.

On the inward half where the score was better, only one set of scores could not be arranged to form a three-figure prime. By inspection, for a total of 14, neither 248 nor 266 can be arranged as primes; for 15, none of the scores can be arranged as primes; for 16 neither 268, 448, nor 466; and for 18, none of the sets are suitable. Therefore the scores for each hole going out added up to 19, and coming in to 17. Neither 458 nor 566 can be arranged as a prime, therefore one of these must be deleted.

The scores now read—

out 289, 379, 388, 469, 478, 559, 568, 577, 667.
in 269, 278, 359, 368, 377, 449, 467, 557, 458 or 566.

not necessarily in that order. Three 2's occur, of which one is accounted for. Therefore Lachesis must have had the other two 2's.

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: W. J. Darbon, 19 Gamlen Road, S.W.15.

Seven points are awarded.

PROBLEM 334.—THE SCREW STREET GANG

Annoying, about this problem. I devoted a week-end to its construction and then spoilt my statement of it by an error in transcription. As several solvers have spotted, Swiveller's statement:

"If Benson is One-Eyed Mike, Isaacs is not *Two-Gun Titus*"

is evidently redundant, for we know that Isaacs is not Two-Gun Titus, in any case. This statement should have read:

"If Benson is One-Eyed Mike, Isaacs is not the *Dixie Kid*"

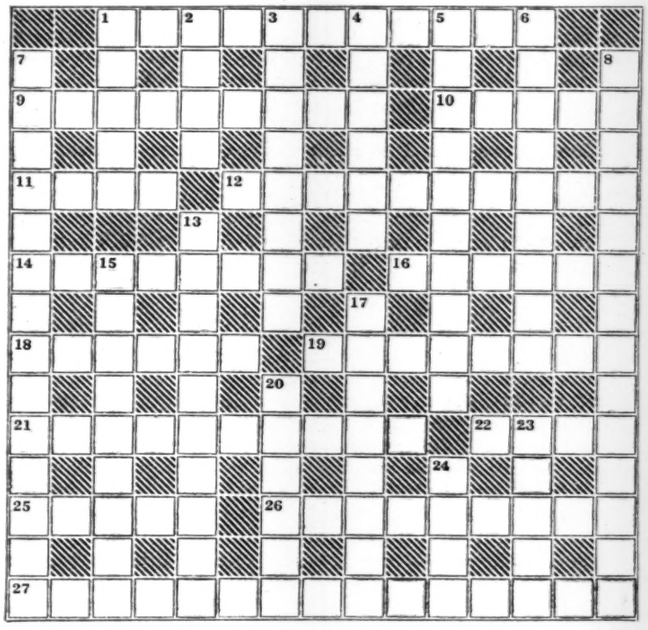
I also omitted to give the seventh alias ("Squealer").

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: Mr. H. Brolly, 28 Greenhill Avenue, Giffnock, Glasgow.

Six points are awarded. CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 482

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

J. H. G. Gibbs, Fosters, Hall Lane, Upminster, Essex.

ACROSS

1. Where Chamberlain has put Poland for Hitler? (11)
9. I cane both by turns. (9)
10. Notable plant for Scotland. (5)
11. Does it sound like a circular? (4)
12. The hog stole it from the Divine (10)
14. Do they make one's teeth hot and sticky? (8)
16. Put us in a 10. (6)
18. A water rat in Scotland. (6)
19. Little Conrad's favourite last meal of the day? (8)
21. Usual exits for those who seek fresh air. (10)
22. A very small area for a town. (4)
25. Always a material word. (5)
26. What you take when you mount a bucking horse? (9)
27. Present-day sport of kings? (15)

DOWN

1. Frequently belonging to 10. (5).
2. Gets your goat in the Himalayas. (4)
3. What babies get when they discover their toes. (8)
4. He put his wife out of sight. (6)
5. Nicely judged cut by the old man with the scythe. (10)
6. "The stars, bright —— of the skies." (9)
7. 4's wife at a christening perhaps. (14)
8. Boot or sack. (14)
13. Episcopal office book. (10)
15. In the manner of husbandry? (9)
17. People get incensed with what he carries. (8)
20. Are nothing to a couple of companies. (6)
23. The propellor faces to the front in this boat. (5)
24. Ancient STOP signal for road traffic. (4)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

■	C	O	U	N	T	I	N	G	H	O	U	S	E	■
L	■	V	■	O	■	M	■	A	■	R	■	E	■	C
O	V	E	R	L	A	P	■	B	I	R	E	T	T	A
N	■	R	■	A	■	O	■	L	■	I	■	B	■	R
D	E	B	E	N	T	U	R	E	■	S	H	A	R	P
O	■	I	■	■	■	N	■	■	■	R	■	C	■	E
N	O	D	U	L	E	D	■	C	R	O	C	K	E	T
B	■	■	■	O	■	E	■	R	■	O	■	■	■	B
R	E	B	O	R	E	D	■	O	U	T	F	A	C	E
I	■	A	■	D	■	■	■	T	■	■	■	F	■	A
D	U	C	K	S	■	J	A	C	K	S	P	R	A	T
G	■	I	■	H	■	A	■	H	■	I	■	I	■	E
E	E	L	P	I	E	S	■	E	N	G	A	G	E	R
■	■	L	■	P	■	O	■	T	■	M	■	H	■	■
■	F	I	T	S	A	N	D	S	T	A	R	T	S	■

CRUISES TO GREEK ISLANDS
20 DAYS—FROM 29 GNS. FULLY INCLUSIVE.
Aug. 10-29 and Aug. 25-Sept. 13.
Visiting: Venice, Delphi, Athens, Istanbul, Samothrace, Lesbos, Olympia, Miletus, Dubrovnik, Mycenæ, &c. 29-75 gns., including 2nd class rail fare to Venice, meals en route, and all shore excursions.
ANGLO-HELLENIC TOURS LIMITED,
54/55 Princes House, Princes Arcade, Piccadilly, S.W.1. REGent 2630.

For cleaning Silver, Electro Plate, &c.
"Goddard's" Plate Powder 6d. 1/- & 2/-
Liquid Polish 9d. & 1/3

PERSONAL

THE INSTITUTE OF PRIVATE SECRETARIES invites enquiries for those requiring Private Secretaries of either sex. (No fees.) For comprehensive brochure apply SECRETARY (NS), 8 New Court, Lincoln's Inn, London, W.C.2 (Holborn 2208).

FRENCH by experienced Licenciée (Paris). Ring Euston 3809 between 1 and 2.30 p.m.

A SMALL group of craft workers desire one or two more to join, sharing expenses of simple household in beautiful country. Land adjoining available. Box 5030.

INDIGESTION AND NERVE CASES. St. Francis Hospital, Red Lion Square, W.C. Weds., 10.

BOOKSHOP in London for sale. Left Book Club. Write Box 5146.

BUSINESS GIRL wishes share her attractive flat with another business girl. HAM. 2889 before 9.30 a.m., after 7 p.m.

WANTED: Large house, huts, or barns suitable for Refugee Holiday Camp for three summer-weeks. Box 5137.

DENTIST'S old-established, lucrative practice and residence. Improving position in main road. Owner can stay. Moderate and easy terms. CHAS. T. DAVIS, 22 Broad Street, Bristol.

SEASIDE Hut for sale. Excellent condition. Inexpensive. Box 5183.

MAN not novice (34) wishes to join yachting party (sea-going, not Broads) about July 28th for 10 days. Share expenses. Box 5116.

GIRL REFUGEE needs hospitality in London while completing training: at work daily, but would do odd jobs in the evenings. WARD, 29 Queenswood Court, S.W.4. Tulse Hill 3950.

NUDIST CLUB, RESIDENTIAL; 15 minutes from Marble Arch (Telephone: Gla. 6153). Equipped for table tennis, artificial sunlight, exercises, dancing, darts, etc., hot and cold showers. Write enclosing stamped envelope. SECRETARY, 72 Shoot Up Hill, N.W.2.

GROUP THEATRE
Members Wanted

SINCE 1932 THE PLAYS PRODUCED HAVE INCLUDED
SWEENEY AGONISTES: *by T. S. Eliot.* FULGENS AND LUCRECE: *by Henry Medwall (the first English secular comedy).* THE DANCE OF DEATH: *by W. H. Auden.* THE DOG BENEATH THE SKIN: *by W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood.* THE AGAMEMNON OF AESCHYLUS: *translated by Louis MacNeice.* THE ASCENT OF F6: *by W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood (presented in association with Ashley Dukes).* OUT OF THE PICTURE: *by Louis MacNeice.* TRIAL OF A JUDGE: *by Stephen Spender.* THE HUMAN VOICE: *by Jean Cocteau.* ON THE FRONTIER: *by W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood.*

NEXT PRODUCTION A REVIVAL OF
THE ASCENT OF F6
by W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood

DIRECTORS: *Production:* Rupert Doone.
Literary: Stephen Spender.
Decor.: Robert Medley, John Piper.
Music: Benjamin Britten, Brian Easdale.

Annual Subscription £1 1s. Students and working T.U. members 7s. 6d.
For further particulars apply to the Secy., Group Theatre Rooms, 9, Gt. Newport Street, W.C.2 (TEM. 6382)

PERSONAL—continued

HELP SPAIN'S REFUGEES: By typing circular letters at home or in your spare time. Volunteers also welcomed at National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief Office 30 Eccleston Street, S.W.1. Write, call or telephone (Sloane 9866).

RUSSIAN tuition, in all branches, by trained, experienced native lady teacher. London references. Box 4969.

HOSPITALITY sought for a few weeks in country for middle-aged, cultured widow from Vienna; now in London. Box 5192.

TOM LONG that most delectable of weeds
The "grand old rich" that meets a smoker's needs.

YOU won't have to pose in a stuffy studio when you are photographed by ANTHONY PANTING at 5 Paddington Street, W.1. WEL. 4950.

MEAT EATING INVOLVES CRUELTY
WHY NOT TRY VEGETARIANISM?
Free Literature, including Recipes, from
THE VEGETARIAN SOCIETY, 57 Princess Street, Manchester, 2.

DETECTIVES. Divorce, Enquiries, etc. Terms moderate. Consultations free. UNIVERSAL DETECTIVES, 12 Henrietta Street, W.C.2. Tem. Bar 8504.

HEALTH

MISS J. D. WALLINGTON (and Mrs. Helen Whitticom), Health Practitioner, Osteopath, and Bonesetter, treats all conditions of ill-health by natural methods. Consultations by appointment, 1 Ashley Place, S.W.1. Tel.: Victoria 6431; and 2 Norton Way North, Letchworth. Tel.: Letchworth 885.

SUNBATHING. At Fouracres in Hertfordshire intelligent people enjoy sunbathing, games, swimming, in pleasant society and surroundings. Particulars from SECRETARY. Box 4363.

SUNBATHING near Watford. Secluded woodland near trains and buses. Families especially welcomed. Swimming, games. Low fees. Write BM/S.D.S.S. London, W.C.1.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

THE GILT-EDGED BOOM AND NEW ZEALAND—LONDON FARE INCREASE AND TRANSPORT "C"—SHELL

SUNSHINE had reached the City long before the Whitsun week-end, so that it was not surprising to find the Stock Exchange reopening this week in cheerful mood. The sustained rise in the gilt-edged market is being happily exploited by borrowers. After the successful £5,000,000 South Africa 3½ per cent. loan last week, since quoted at 98 (or a premium of 1½) to yield £3 10*s.* 3*d.* per cent., the Government of Northern Ireland has issued £2,500,000 3¾ per cent. stock 1950/54 at 98½ to yield £3 16*s.* per cent. flat and £3 18*s.* 3*d.* to redemption. Like the South African it was heavily "stagged." The next important offer is expected to be from New Zealand which has to meet a maturing £17,000,000 3½ per cent. loan on 1st January, 1940. Finance Minister Mr. Nash has arrived in London to negotiate the conversion of this loan and to discuss also trade and defence expenditures. The City, which is hostile to Mr. Nash, is arguing that the New Zealand Government is spending too much and is heading for bankruptcy, but our industrial exporters contend that she is buying too little from this country. Mr. Nash explained on his arrival that his Government could have curtailed imports more severely, but they were anxious to offset the restrictions on luxury and consumable goods by larger imports of capital goods for the equipment of the secondary industries which they hoped to develop. He admitted that this policy would not help the budget, for the restricted luxury-consumable goods carried higher duties than the capital goods, but he believed it was the right policy to adopt for the long-term. New Zealand's sterling balances fell from £45,000,000 to £7,000,000 last year, but have risen again to between £12,000,000 and £13,000,000. Mr. Nash hoped to provide for the January maturity either from their own resources or from a new loan, and if they had to apply to the market they would pay the market rate. "If 4½ per cent. is the market yield on New Zealand stocks," he said, "they would pay 4½ per cent." Unfortunately it is slightly more, as the following table indicates:—

	Price	Gross Yield % Flat	Redemp.
New Zealand 4% 1943/63 ..	89¾	£4 10 3	£5 0 0
New Zealand 4½% 1944 ..	99¾	£4 11 0	£4 17 9
New Zealand 4½% 1948/58 ..	98¼	£4 12 6	£4 15 3
New Zealand 5% 1946	102⅝	£4 19 0	£4 15 6

Mr. Nash has a difficult problem to meet. Perhaps he would be wise to borrow short, while New Zealand credit remains bad, or to couple with the conversion issue a defence loan which will appeal to the patriotic instincts of the Conservative leaders in the City who object so strongly to his Socialism.

* * *

Another cause for cheerfulness in the City was the granting of the 5 per cent. fare increase in the "pooled" London area by the Railway Rates Tribunal. This is another case of what the Editor calls "cold socialisation"—i.e., the substitution of a gilt-edged stock at the expense of the taxpayer for a speculative industrial equity. The Tribunal declared that it could find no warrant for the contention that the public interest, as opposed to the financial interests of the London Transport Board's stockholders, should be regarded as paramount in determining the application for an increase in fares. It further refused to accept the contention that the Board was not bound to pay the standard dividend of 5½ per cent. on the C stock more than once in three years. It found that the revenues of the Board were insufficient to defray its charges and that three of the four main line companies were not making a sufficient net revenue to allow them to carry out their public responsibilities efficiently. It could see no chance of securing the required additional revenues except by an increase of fares. Nevertheless it is extremely doubtful whether the full 5 per cent. increase in fares would have been granted if the London Transport Board had not been bound by a standard dividend clause and if a Committee of the C stockholders (with the necessary 5 per cent. holding) had not been ready and empowered to apply for a receivership. No, the L.T.B. belongs to the class of hybrid public boards run neither in the interests of the public as a whole nor entirely in the selfish interests of the stockholders.

* * *

The current dividend on L.T.B. "C" stock is 4 per cent., which was only met last year by drawing on reserves to the extent of £230,000. It is estimated that the net increase in the "pool" receipts as a result of the 5 per cent. increase in fares will be £1,179,000 in a full year, of which £732,000 will accrue to the Transport Board and about £300,000 to the Southern Railway. In the opinion of the Tribunal this will be sufficient to allow the Board to meet the standard dividend of 5½ per cent. on the "C" stock with over £100,000 to spare—or sufficient to establish the reserve fund provided for in the Act. Since this announcement was made L.T.B. "C" stock has jumped about 11 points. At the moment of writing it has reacted to 81½, at which price it yields £4 18*s.* 3*d.* per cent. on a 4 per cent. dividend and £6 15*s.* 0*d.* per cent. on a 5½ per cent. dividend. To this unpleasing product of "cold socialisation" I prefer Southern Railway 5 per cent. preferred ordinary. The £300,000 additional revenue accruing to the Southern in a full year is equivalent to more than 1 per cent. on this stock, which last year received its maximum dividend. At 75½ the Southern preferred ordinary is still reasonably valued to yield £6 12*s.* 6*d.* per cent.

* * *

I seem to have been alone in suggesting that Shell Transport would pay the extra 2½ per cent. dividend, making 20 per cent. tax free for the year. At 4⅜ c.d. to yield £6 7*s.* per cent. gross these shares are still among the cheapest industrial investments. I think investors should give preference to shares of companies whose earnings will expand in this unnatural period of rearmament boom without the stimulus of direct Government orders. Armament firms will boom more conspicuously, but the promised Government limitation of earnings or special taxations of "white-war" profits must deprive the armament or semi-armament equities of their usual attraction. All industrial firms benefit, of course, indirectly from the vast Government expenditures, but the following shares, in addition to Shell Transport, are not primarily concerned with rearmament:

	Earnings	%	Div. %	Div. Yield %
Lever Bros. and Unilever, £1 ..	37/-	*19.8	10	£5 12 6
Tunnel Cement, 10*s.*	40/-	33.9	22½	£5 12 6
Bolsover Colliery, £1	43/-	19.5	12½	£5 16 3
English Electric, £1	35/9	27.8	10	£5 11 9

If there is any reaction in markets through disappointment over the progress of the Russian negotiations I suggest that a select purchase of these equity shares would do the investor no harm.

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Net Trading Profit for year to 31st March, 1939	**£456,958**
Total Reserves and Carry Forward ..	**£1,091,136**
Dividends on Ordinary Stock	**30%**

POINTS from the Speech of Mr. MAGNUS GOODFELLOW (Chairman) at the Annual General Meeting of THE EVER READY COMPANY (GREAT BRITAIN) LIMITED, on June 1st, 1939.

While the Report and Accounts before you show a reduction in the Profits earned and a reduction in the Dividend the Directors propose should be paid to you, yet if the difficulties of the past year and the strength of our position at the end of it be taken into account, we should not be dissatisfied with the result.

COMPETITION.

The price competition on the home market has been an important factor in the health and strength of our business, and I shall devote a little time to explaining the happenings during the year under review. We have, for many years, had to meet competition of two kinds, from Companies who sell their goods at reasonable prices equivalent to our own, and from Companies who sell their goods at lower prices, regardless of cost, for the purpose especially of attacking our market. During the first three months of the year under review, this second form of competition interfered considerably with our sales and it became necessary to deal energetically with it. I need not emphasise the care and consideration we gave to the matter, sufficient it is that we reduced the prices of various goods, and with the loyal assistance of our friends in the wholesale and retail trades, we not only arrested the fall in sales, but by the end of the year we had achieved the increase of 5 per cent. in volume referred to in our Report to you. This increase in the volume of our sales would, under normal trading conditions, have earned a total Profit equal, at least, to that of the previous year, but various unforeseen increases in costs and distributing expenses encountered throughout the year, contributed to the fall in Profit already reported to you—when the final accounting came to be made.

PRESENT YEAR'S TRADING.

Our competitive policy continues to be successful, sales during April and May—both in volume and value—are substantially in advance of the sales of a year ago, and I am hopeful that we shall not only maintain our present position this year, but that we shall achieve an improvement.

ACCOUNTS.

In dealing with the Balance Sheet, the Chairman pointed out that the Issued Capital has remained constant at £1,210,402, and that Reserves and Carry Forward have risen by some £88,000 to £1,091,136. The surplus of Current Assets over Current Liabilities amounts to £351,000 in the Accounts under review, as compared with £284,000 at the end of the previous year.

FUTURE PROSPECTS.

The continued threat of war, with the consequent possibility of damage to our manufacturing plants, has caused us not only to participate in the various Governmental A.R.P. plans, but, in addition, to put in hand the re-equipment of two old factories previously closed as obsolete. We hope thereby to be in a position to manufacture and supply our goods during any period of emergency. I think I have conveyed to you to-day the strength of our trading and asset position, and that I view the future of our business with hope and confidence.

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